



Biodynamic Landscape Design

What is Biodynamic gardening about?

As the earth herself is a living being influenced by the Sun, Moon, planets and stars, so too is your garden as it is part of the Earth. Biodynamic gardening is about working with, and appreciating these influences thereby planting, pruning, harvesting and working the soil when the timing is at its most beneficial. In the bigger picture this means working with nature and realizing that everything in our garden is part of one organism. Getting to know the history and memory of the landscape with a reverence for all the living creatures within it is also important. We hardly notice that we have all become detached from our natural surroundings. Getting reacquainted with our natural surroundings, starting in our own garden brings joy and satisfaction to our life. The garden becomes a place for nurture and caring, contemplation and meditation and when we work Biodynamically we hope to bring about the healing and renewal of an Earth that is overburdened and weakened by a growing onslaught of pollution by unnatural chemicals and unnatural way of life.

Biodynamics encourages us to become aware of everything that can influence plant growth. These can come from deep inside our Earth and from the far reaches of our cosmos. Biodynamics teaches that the soil is alive and the degree of this aliveness determines the health and vibrancy of the growing plant life and subsequently the human race that depend on it. Learning about biodynamics does not come about overnight and it is not taught in our conventional educational system. At present the best courses available are taught at Emerson College in England. The Biodynamic Association in Ireland and the UK regularly hold workshops and subscription to their membership is highly recommended. Check out bdaai@indigo.ie or www.demeter.ie and www.biodynamic.org.uk



Through these you will be directed to many publications that will expand your knowledge. Current publications include: A Biodynamic sowing and planting calendar by Maria and Matthias Thun is available from Floris Books. This highlights the best planting days in each month. Plants are categorized in 4 groups: Root, Leaf, Flower and Fruit. Most calendars are specifically focused on food plants but it can equally be applied to ornamental plants. Planting on the correct days results in strong healthy plants. This is a definite advantage for gardeners who do not use pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Hoeing and weeding the beds each month on the same category days opens up the soil to the individual elements flowing toward the earth for each group of plants. Example a root such as a potato is planted on a root day and the same bed is hoed and weeded on a root day also. Harvesting also follows a calendar. This is the simplest of explanations and indeed it is as much a way of life as it is a philosophy. The best results are obtained by putting it into practice and experimenting in your own garden.

For further reading we refer to the works of Rudolf Steiner who started the Biodynamic Agricultural Movement back in 1924.

Other reading: Biodynamic Gardening for health and taste by Hilary Wright

For further information, visit these Irish biodynamic websites:

www.biodynamics.ie

www.biodynamic.ie

The Biodynamic Agricultural Association of Ireland can be contacted at bdaai@indigo.ie.

The Sowing and Planting calendar, as well as a range of books including “Grow a Garden and be Self-Sufficient” are available from their office at the following address:

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Camphill Jerpoint
Thomastown
Co. Kilkenny
051 347245