

Forest Floor Permaculture – Lawrence, KS

Permaculture Apprenticeship Program

Forest Floor Permaculture is a nut and fruit centered forest garden, established 30 years ago on a one-half acre urban site located in the Brook Creek watershed on the east side of Lawrence, KS.

We are accepting apprenticeship applications for the 2010-2011 growing season by individuals with knowledge of permaculture fundamentals, and who are interested in gaining advanced theory and practical hands-on training. While this is not a permaculture design course, the instruction given in this locally adapted working food forest will provide insights and techniques that can be universally applied. Some permaculture design certificate courses may accept apprenticeship experience as leading to a design certificate.

Apprentices at Forest Floor Permaculture will learn about organic food production using a diverse perennial polyculture designed in patterns of plant communities that mimic natural ecosystems. In permaculture, we do not design predictable components, but rather dynamic patterns of plant and soil relationships. The intent is to maintain the soil horizon through no-till practices and sheet mulching, maximize absorption and retention of water through swales and accumulated organic matter, and position plants by size, type and proximity so as to create healthy and symbiotic relationships. If done well, the forest garden will become self fertilizing and self maintaining, with little intervention or external inputs.

The apprentice instruction will cover the following areas:

- Forest garden design of the canopy, understory, shrub, and herb layers
- Site analysis, assessment, and inventory
- Earthworks including swales and berms for water retention
- Communities of plant guilds: nitrogen fixers, insectory plants, nutrient accumulators, etc.
- Annual raised bed vegetables, including seed saving
- Thinning, pruning, weeding (and ways to minimize these)
- Organic soil amendments and biological control of pests
- Special forms: bog, prairie, wetland, sun trap, etc.

Program Guidelines: Apprentice time commitment can be arranged to fulfill the needs of instructor and apprentice. There are dormant season activities needing attention from October to March, but the busy season will be from March to October. Generally, an apprentice will be expected to participate 6 to 10 hours a week for a minimum of 3 months. They will have to provide their own transportation and expenses.

Apply by sending a detailed letter describing yourself, interests, why you wish to apprentice, what you hope to learn, and when and how long you wish to participate in the program. Include two references with your application. Mail your application to:

Apprentice Program
Forest Floor Permaculture
1311 Prairie Ave.
Lawrence KS 66044

For questions about the program:
call (785)832-1300
or e-mail: <paradigm@ixks.com>