



Permaculture Design Certificate Autumn 2025

April 23-27, May 9-11 & 24-25

10- day course at The Food Forest, Gawler, South Australia

With David Holmgren, Graham and Annemarie Brookman & Others

Why Study Permaculture?

Join us for internationally-recognised permaculture training that will help you design sustainable, abundant homes, businesses, professions and communities.

Whilst population growth and consumption levels are pushing our Planet towards a catastrophic environmental tipping point, permaculture design offers a way that we, as individuals and communities, can take control of our future and live sustainably.

It is a design system which draws upon the great truths of traditional knowledge, modern scientific understandings and the ethics of a peaceful and democratic society. Developed in Australia in the late 70's by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, it is now taught in over 150 countries. Over two million people have graduated from Design Courses and are using this tool to build resilience and diversity into their lives, local communities & workplaces.

Permaculture can be employed by anyone, whatever profession or skill on any scale, anywhere on the planet and in any climate. At an individual level and household, urban or rural, to balconies, backyards & neighbourhoods, to farms, offices, factories, businesses, schools and cities. It offers a sustainable landscape and inclusive dignified human-scale living. Every action and choice we make can make a difference, no matter how small, and can influence the world around us.

It offers a framework for successful ethical enterprises and helps setting goals.

Permaculture is based on three ethics: Care of the Earth, Care of Community and Acceptance of personal responsibility for consumption and population. Many practical design principles, technologies and strategies have evolved to make permaculture one of the most accessible and dynamic solutions to the issues we face in the 21st Century.

David Suzuki dubbed permaculture 'Australia's greatest intellectual export'.

Permaculture Design Certificate

April 23-27, May 9-11 & 24-25

10 days spread out over three teaching blocks during April & May.

This 10 day intensive design course, taught at The Food Forest focusses on exploring how you can integrate permaculture principles into all areas of life – it doesn't have to be on a piece of land. This course will present you with an opportunity to consider your life in a new light and give you increased confidence and many skills needed to design a sustainable and meaningful place for your future. David Holmgren's participation will be Face-to-Face during the first teaching block to lay the foundation. In addition to the Brookmans, the course is supported by an experienced team of SA tutors, each with their own specialities.



You will work with a group of motivated fellow students with diverse skills and backgrounds and learn through a diverse range of teaching styles which include lectures, practical activities, small group work, case studies, films, field trips, games and from each other. In addition to our teaching team, you will have access to a wide range of printed and digital resources. Extensive course notes are provided.



The extended format of the course is designed to cause minimum disruption to other parts of your life. It will allow you to absorb and practise skills from one learning block before moving on to the next.

Please note that the first teaching block of 5 days starts on Wednesday April 23rd, and will include the Anzac Day Public holiday on Friday the 25th. Over the 3 teaching blocks, there are some weekdays and these may need some planning to have off. The program starts each day at 8.30am and we finish 5.15pm, apart from the first teaching day on the 23rd, when we finish the day with a 'happy hour' welcome drinks (5pm- 6pm). On the last Saturday of the course, May 24th, we also include dinner and a final night party.

Whilst this extended format may seem less than ideal if you are from a distant location, many participants from further away, use it as an opportunity to visit friends, permaculture projects or to WWOOF between teaching blocks.

In The Food Forest PDC you will work on a **major design project of your choice**. We will take you through the design process, from the initial brief, to completion and the final presentation. Many of the excellent designs have been implemented around the world. Please note, 'Homework' will be required outside the course hours & between teaching blocks.

Whilst many people study permaculture as a design system for their personal and/or professional lives, successful completion of the course will qualify you for a Permaculture Design Certificate which makes you eligible to practice or teach permaculture commercially. The course may also be recognised as relevant prior learning towards the completion of requirements for the nationally accredited VET Certificate IV in Permaculture.

You will need to attend at least 80% of the course and complete your part in the design project, in order to attain a PDC certificate.

Topics

The course at The Food Forest will cover such topics as:

- Permaculture ethics and principles
- Reading landscape, land capability assessment, site mapping
- Personal, family and community strategies
- Appropriate human settlements and planning
- Architecture: Passive solar design for houses and structures
- Sustainable energy sources, 'waste' and recycling
- Linking of design elements for optimum efficiency
- Soil Health: improvements and maintenance
- Urban and rural farming and gardening
- Food forests
- Alternative social and economic models & legal structures
- Water management (at home, urban & rural) & catchments
- Animals in permaculture
- Biodiversity in both urban and rural settings
- Value-adding and 'direct marketing' of food
- Application of Permaculture Design in businesses, professions & trades
- And more.....



Whilst many examples will be drawn from warm temperate environments (as experienced in South Australia), care will be taken to make the teaching relevant to other climatic areas.

We stress that the PDC is a **design** course covering the topics listed above equipping you with knowledge for your Permaculture design toolkit. There is insufficient time to address the fine detail and practical skills of for instance, caring for chickens or growing mushrooms. We, and others, do offer practical workshops on such skills.

Principal Tutors



Annemarie Brookman is co-owner of The Food Forest and runs its organic market garden and busy office. She organises the educational programs, The Food Forest's stall at the Adelaide Farmers Market and coordinates staff at the property. She has observed societies, crafts and cuisines in many countries. Her passion for local, wholesome, delicious and visually beautiful food and her skills as a designer are expressed in a direct and practical manner. She is expert in the integration of poultry and vegetable production and is a keen observer & photographer of insect ecosystems. Time management, small scale marketing, engaging children in gardening and the natural environment, mentoring to empower people to get involved with the future of their food and sustainable home-building are included in her talents. She is a qualified teacher in permaculture design & training, art and craft, and is a strong contributor to the permaculture movement in SA.



Graham Brookman has experienced land use all over the world and his search for ecologically sustainable farming systems led him to the permaculture model devised by Mollison and Holmgren. Graham has put the model to the test and teaches his findings in an energetic, interactive and practical style. Discovering how to build with straw bales has given Graham free rein with the construction of a series of beautiful and environmentally responsible structures. He has taught hundreds of others how simple it is to use straw bales in building anything from a garden bench to a house. He is a qualified horticulturalist, teacher and permaculture designer and was founding chairman of the Adelaide Showground Farmers Market and the Gawler Environment Centre. Though first a farmer and horticulturalist, he has been involved in town planning and has made numerous educational films. He is passionate about water and sunshine, their capture and efficient use. He has created a new breed of mini sheep for use in orchards, vineyards and farms and dedicates much time and effort to the [repair of the Gawler River](#).



David Holmgren, is the co-originator of the permaculture concept and co-authored 'Permaculture One', with Bill Mollison in 1978. David is globally recognised as a leading ecological thinker, teacher, speaker and writer. David will be presenting face-to-face during the first part of the course, providing a unique opportunity to revisit your values and techniques or start your permaculture career at the cutting edge. In 2003 David published "Permaculture: Principles & Pathways Beyond Sustainability", a book which was the first significant development on the permaculture concept since Bill Mollison's "Permaculture Designers' Manual" (1988). David continues to refine permaculture in his writings and research. His book, 'RetroSuburbia' was launched in 2018 and is a key reference for practical urban design. Late 2020 he and Beck Lowe launched "[Our Street](#)", a permaculture story book for kids.

Guest Tutors and Field Visits

A wide range of guest tutors, selected for skills and qualifications in their particular field and their commitment to sustainable living and permaculture, will also teach in the course. Tours will visit a wide variety of outstanding examples of permaculture and the people who are making it work, in & near Adelaide.

COVID

This course will be managed in accordance with the government guidelines in place at the time of the course dates. If you are/become unwell leading up to or during the course, please contact us to discuss options for your participation.

The Venue

Our land is on Kurna country, and we respect their connection to this land, water and community. We are celebrating more than 20 years of running PDCs at The Food Forest with Graham & Annemarie Brookman, David Holmgren and other amazing guest presenters. The property is a remarkable 20 hectare, certified organic

permaculture farm and learning centre that is the result of the passion and vision of owners Graham & Annemarie. From its buzzing biodiversity come over 150 varieties of organically grown fruit and nuts (including pistachios, pecans, macadamias), cereals and vegetables, honey and carob beans, as well as free range eggs, livestock, nursery plants and timber. Most of The Food Forest's produce is sold at the Adelaide Farmers Market. We'll be harvesting and eating some of the products during the PDC!

The campus demonstrates strawbale building technology, active and passive solar design, food value-adding, running a permaculture business and successful collaboration with local government, Landscape Boards, refugee groups and educational institutions at all levels.

Broadband Wi-Fi access is available in the extensive teaching area.

Logistics

Food

Lunch, morning & afternoon tea each day, and the final night dinner (Sat May 24th) are included in the registration and include vegetarian, vegan and omnivorous options. Delicious, healthy, local and seasonal is important to us! A lot of the food served at the course will be harvested from The Food Forest, including many varieties of fruit, nuts, vegetables and herbs. We have also preserved produce from the different seasons. We don't produce everything; milk, cheese, bread and some grains, pulses & meat will be sourced locally, in many cases direct from the producers. We do our best to cater for different needs but as we are cooking for a substantial number of people, please note that for *very specialised* dietary requirements you may need to bring some of your own supplies.



Accommodation

We are not able to offer accommodation at The Food Forest. If local accommodation is required, there is a wide range of options available in and near Gawler to suit your needs, from the local caravan parks to Airbnb.

The closest is at our neighbours, 'Riverdell' ([Venue Hire & Accommodation – Riverdell Spiritual Centre](#)) which offers a variety of options including camping and well-appointed homes with prices as low as \$30 per night for an unpowered campsite, all within 5 min walking distance of The Food Forest. Limited spaces available. For bookings, contact Justin Martin from Riverdell Spiritual Centre on 0481 851 329 or via admin@riverdell.org.au.

Of course, if you don't live far away, you may want to commute and there is a good train connection to Adelaide.

A gift

'Pip', Australia's own permaculture magazine, has been publishing inspirational articles for 11 years now. This is a great milestone! We will include a free copy at the start of the course. Issue 31, published last year, includes an article by Hannah Maloney about The Food Forest for this issue and has a painting of Annemarie on the front cover.



Come Prepared

We strongly recommend reading some of the following texts. Check out David Holmgren's abundant [on-line store, or](#) you can visit your local bookshop, 2nd hand bookshop or local library:

Books & magazines:

- Permaculture: 'Principles & Pathways Beyond Sustainability', David Holmgren. His website: holmgren.com.au, has an abstract of this book as a free download. Look for 'Essence of Permaculture'. Easy to read and not too long. *This abstract is a 'must-read before the course'*
- David Holmgren's 'RetroSuburbia: the downshifter's guide to a resilient future': <https://www.retrosurbia.com>

- The Milkwood Permaculture Living Handbook, Habits for Hope in a Changing World, Kirsten Bradley, Murdoch Books 2023
- The Good Life, How to Grow a Better World, Hannah Maloney, 2021, Affirm Press
- Good Life Growing How to grow Fruit and Veg anywhere in Australia, 2023) <http://goodlifepermaculture.com.au>
- Costa's World, Costa Georgiadis ('easy-peasy' permaculture, and more), www.costasworld.com.au, 2021
- Earth Restorer's Guide to Permaculture, Rosemary Morrow, 2022
- Introduction to Permaculture, Bill Mollison & Reny Slay, Tagari, <https://www.tagaripublications.com/>
- People & Permaculture, Looby Macnamara, Permanent Publications 2012: <http://loobymacnamara.com/home/>
- Tropical Permaculture Guidebook - McKenzie and Lemos www.permacultureguidebook.org
- [PIP magazine](#): Australia's permaculture magazine. Full of great articles –wonderful to subscribe to!
- And many more books and good resources...

Web based:

- Good Life Permaculture, based in Hobart, Tasmania, inspirational!: <http://goodlifepermaculture.com.au/>
- Milkwood Permaculture; excellent info: www.milkwood.net
- Richard Telford's website: <http://www.permacultureprinciples.com/> Excellent! Has easy to read info about permaculture. Lots of photos and diverse examples.
- Brenna Quinlan (also publishes books & awesome posters): <https://www.brennaquinlan.com/>
- Charlie McGee, 'Formidable Vegetable', permaculture put into music: <https://formidablevegetable.com.au/>
- [Dan Palmer, Author of Making Permaculture Stronger](#)
- Delvin Solkinson: [Home / Permaculture Design, Home | visionary permaculture](#)
- Queer and other vulnerable communities: [: About Us — PermaQueer](#)
- An explanation of The 12 Principles Design of Permaculture By David Holmgren - YouTube
- Geoff Lawton's website: www.permaculture.org.au . It includes a segment on The Food Forest:<http://www.geofflawtononline.com/videos/video/commercial-dryland-food-forest/>
- Many more websites and YouTube clips

There are many other Permaculture book titles, DVDs and there is a lot to Google about Permaculture. Have fun!

Costs

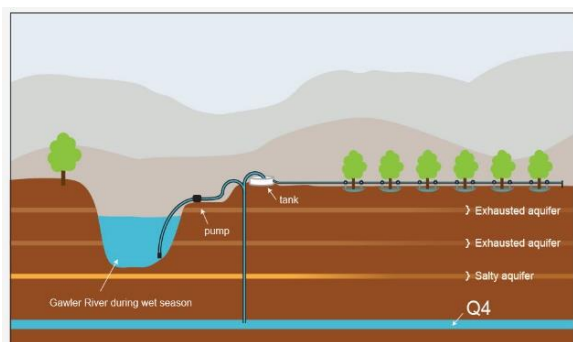
The costs are outlined at the end of the brochure on pg 8.

More information about The Food Forest

Teaching and research

The farm conducts research into organic growing and climate change adaptation and hosts collections of tree crop varieties representing a unique genetic resource, willingly shared with others wishing to establish sustainable plantings. New structures have been designed and built to enable more efficient growth of crops, providing shade, shelter, bird protection and trellising, which massively improve water use and yields.

Valuable information about the hydrogeology of the Adelaide Plain has come from the farm's scheme to draw water from the Gawler River and recharge the aquifer underlying the locality, to offset declining water levels and quality.



After visiting an inspirational permaculture farm in India in 2019, The Food Forest has drawn upon inventive technologies for water harvesting and underground water storage observed overseas, to capture and transform stormwater into a valuable input. More recently, the farm has had to face the issue of rising salinity in both groundwater and the river, through the transition to some alternative species and design of a desalination process.

The Food Forest has a long history of demonstrating and teaching permaculture at school TAFE, University and Permaculture Design Certificate Autumn 2025

community levels, including the foundational Accredited Permaculture Teacher Training course in SA. The Food Forest also has an extensive short courses program which complements the PDC. The property operates as one big teaching area and course participants will be involved in a hands-on permaculture project such as revegetation or garden construction.

History

The heritage-listed pioneer homestead and much of the history of the farm have been retained. When the Brookmans bought the property in 1986, it was not much more than a bare barley paddock; only a few towering River Red Gums remained along the Gawler River from the time when the Kurna Aboriginal people lived on this land.

The riparian understorey had become a mass of boxthorn, prickly pear and sour sob and the soil was degraded from years of continuous cropping. The indigenous riparian ecosystem has now largely been restored creating diverse habitat. It is now expanding kilometres downstream thanks to the lead from our local revegetation group (GRRR), whose revegetation systems have been adopted by other groups.

A movie made about the river repair is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_r62zvWKhk



Sustainable building technology

An old stone barn has been transformed into a versatile Learning Centre for the presentation of courses and workshops. It is equipped with data projectors and areas for small group work/breakout sessions. Nearby is the government-approved 'loo with a view', a Clivus Multrum composting toilet & reedbed system which transforms human by-products into reeds for mulching, rich compost for fertiliser and saves many thousands of litres of water every year.

Environmentally responsible building technologies are also demonstrated in 'The Studio', Cellar-door, an Eco-gazebo, the tiny 'Cosy Cottage' and a cool room, all of which are constructed with straw bales.

The Cob Oven shows the ancient craft of building with special mud mixtures.

The extension to the heritage-listed homestead is an exemplar of passive solar design using a fusion of straw bale, stone and well-insulated corrugated iron. You are able to view a segment about the extension, that was part of the National Sustainable House Day in Sept 2020. For the Food Forest homestead extension photos and facts: <https://sustainablehouseday.com/listing/the-food-forest-homestead-extension/> and the video is available on YouTube: https://youtu.be/vB_RfJEO-oU

Rainwater is collected for use in the house; both grey and black water from the house is treated by a reedbed system and used in orchard irrigation. Solar panels heat the water and photovoltaic cells provide the house with almost 7kW of green electricity; surplus power is fed into the grid. A 26kW PV system sits on the food processing shed to supply electricity for food storage & processing and water pumping.



Awards & ABC TV:

- 2020 2020 Craig Walsh, 'Monuments' at WOMADelaide: [WOMADELAIDE ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA — Monuments \(monumentscraigwalsh.net\)](http://WOMADELAIDE ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA — Monuments (monumentscraigwalsh.net))
- 2016 Permaculture Elders Award for Contribution to Permaculture
- 2013 Winner, Barossa Regional Food Awards
Finalist Premier's Natural Resources Management Award: Service to NRM
- 2012 Honourable mention in The (En)Rich list: Post Growth Institute
- 2011 Adelaide Showground Farmers Market: Chef's Inspiration Award
- 2009 Australia Day Corporate Citizen Award, Town of Gawler
- 2007 Winner SA Premier's Food Awards: Environmental Sustainability
- 2006 Finalist National Banksia Environmental Awards, Education category
- 2005 Winner Nature Foundation SA, Good Business Environment Award for Environmental Responsibility & Leadership
- 2004 Winner Premier's Food Awards Leadership in Sustainable Industry
Finalist Year of the Built Environment, Exemplars Program
- 2003 Winner Organic Federation of Australia National Award Best Organic Producer
Runner up for the Best Organic Education Project
- 2005, 2001 State finalist National Landcare Awards

ABC Gardening Australia: Episode 10: A farming special on June 2, 2012. See the 7 minute, permaculture focussed segment on: <http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/food-glorious-food/9433756>

YouTube- Channel 'Food Forest TV'

The Food Forest has made 30 micro movies with experienced cinematographer/video editor Sam Collins, to create 'how to' videos, ranging from practical straw bale building techniques to controlling codling moth in your apple trees and restoring your watercourse.

See the films at <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheFoodForest>

Costs

The following page outlines the course fees and lists early bird discounts & standard prices.

If you need to establish a payment plan to pay the course fee by installments over the period leading up to the PDC, please contact us. We are happy to facilitate this, but we ask you to set up this plan prior to the course, and that the full fee is fully paid before the PDC commences.

After Care

Stay in touch with us by email, Facebook or our quarterly Food Forest Newsletter by subscribing on our website.

The Next PDC

Our next PDC after this one is planned for autumn 2026.

For Details

Annemarie Brookman at The Food Forest:

Postal: PO Box 859, Gawler SA 5118, Australia

P: 08 85226450 E: info@foodforest.com.au W: www.foodforest.com.au

Location: 80 Clifford Rd, Hillier, SA 5116 (20 min walk from Tambelin Railway station on the Gawler line).

See the next page for booking and pricing details:

Permaculture Design Certificate 2025 Price Information Sheet

April 23-27, May 9-11 & 24-25

At The Food Forest, Gawler, South Australia with David Holmgren, the Brookmans & others.



The table below shows our 'earlybird' (before Monday March 31st) compared to 'standard' PDC costs.

Earlybird prices (before COB March 31 st 2025) incl GST	
	Costs
Early bird price	\$1995 pp
Early bird price, partner/group booking	\$1945 pp

Standard prices (from March 31 st 2025) incl GST	
	costs
Standard Price	\$2300 pp
Standard Price, partner/group bookings	\$2250 pp

Securing your spot

- Your place is reserved upon receipt of a \$300 (plus BF) deposit via the Humanitix website: <https://events.humanitix.com/copy-of-permaculture-design-course>.
- Once this payment is made, detailed information about payment options for the remaining balance will be emailed to you.

More information about the course fee

- **Registration includes:** morning & afternoon teas & lunch each day, the happy hour drinks on Day 1, dinner on Sat May 24th, course notes and entry fees on the field trip day.
- To qualify for the early bird discount, final payment is due before, or on Monday March 31st. Balance payments after March 31st attract the standard price. See table below.
- **Partner/ Group prices** apply when bookings for 2 or more people are made **at the same time & in one payment**. Payment for the entire group is to be made in **the one registration/transaction**.
- Payment plan option: if, after you have paid the deposit, you would like to do payment by instalments, please contact us to establish a plan. The full fee needs to be paid prior to the starting date of the course.
- Please note: In recent years the course has filled well before the close of earlybird discount date. We suggest you book early to avoid disappointment.
- **Cancellation:** We understand that circumstances can change. If a cancellation is made before Monday March 31st a refund will be made, minus an admin fee of \$200.00. If you cancel after Monday March 31st, the registration is transferable to a friend or family member but is non-refundable. **If** however, we can successfully offer your spot to someone on our PDC waiting list we will refund your fee minus an admin fee of \$200.00.
- In the event of insufficient registrations or other unforeseen reasons, the organisers reserve the right to cancel the course with one week's notice. In this case a full refund will be made. Unfortunately, we can-not refund travel expenses incurred.
- If COVID is an issue, please contact us.
- Once you have registered and paid the deposit, we will be sending out a questionnaire regarding dietary requirements and some admin related questions in addition to the information about the payment options for the remaining balance.
- Please contact us if you need further information on info@foodforest.com.au