

“Sometimes you encounter new ideas that dramatically change the way you see the world around you & empower you to make a difference!”

Our courses bring together people keen to explore new ideas, skills, foods and information in an environment of diversity, abundance and sharing; they are designed to be experiences rather than classes.

For some people they are the beginning of a new direction in life and for others they are an opportunity to hone well practiced skills of designing, food growing and self reliance. Our aim is to give people the skills needed to design sustainable ways of living at home and in our community.

Our land is on Kurna country and we respect their connection to this land, water and community.

At **The Food Forest** a heritage-listed stone barn has been transformed into a well-equipped Learning Centre and many practical activities also take you out into the orchards, gardens & bushlands of the property. You can also enjoy our loo-with-a-view, a unique composting toilet and reedbed system which transforms human by-products into reeds for mulching, rich compost for fertiliser and bamboo for furniture and structural work. You will see environmentally designed buildings which demonstrate passive and active solar technologies: the ‘Studio’ and its curved garden wall, the “Eco-Gazebo”, the drive-in coolroom, an extension to the over 180 year old homestead and a ‘cellar door’, all of which are built using strawbales. A 7kW photovoltaic system provides electricity to the house and grid; the sun also provides water heating for both the house and the on-farm processing facility. Our processing shed has been equipped with a 26kW PV system to reduce our CO2 emissions from processing our pistachios and other crops.

The Food Forest today is the result of the vision of owners Graham & Annemarie Brookman and functions as a remarkable 20 hectare Permaculture farm and Learning Centre. From its buzzing biodiversity today, come over 150 organically grown varieties of fruit and nuts, wheat and vegetables, free range eggs, honey, carob beans, Australian native foods and timber. The Food Forest sells produce at the Adelaide Farmers Market every fortnight.

The collections of tree crop varieties represent a unique genetic resource; willingly shared with others wishing to establish sustainable plantings.

When the property was purchased in the early 1980s, 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 the Kurna people lived on this land.

The fascinating history of the farm has been preserved in the old stone tank and trough where Clydesdales once drank, the 1840 homestead and old stable, full of historical equipment.

Through community action, the River corridor has been recovered from thickets of pest plants, through the re-establishment of thousands of appropriate plants, offering habitat for native creatures.

The farm also functions like a woodland and mini sheep help the goose flock manage the orchard floor. Together with thousands of species of insects, birds and other creatures, they form the complex and bountiful ecosystem contained within a 1.5 km predator-proof fence.

A unique project to secure a sustainable water supply for the farm, pumps water from the Gawler River in winter, filters it and stores it in an underground aquifer for irrigation in summer.

The Tutors

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 Bill Mollison and David Holmgren.

Graham has put the model to the test and teaches his findings in an energetic, interactive and practical style. He is a qualified horticulturalist, teacher, permaculture designer and accredited trainer. He is also involved with his local community in Natural Resources Management, particularly in the restoration of the Gawler River.

Annemarie Brookman teaches, runs an organic market garden, a stall at the Farmers Market and a busy office and family. She has observed societies, crafts and cuisines in many countries. Her passion for visually beautiful, local and wholesome food and her skills as a designer are expressed in a direct and practical manner. She is skilled in the integration of poultry and vegetable production and is an unashamed lover of chooks. Small scale marketing and fitting systems around the needs and development of children are themes which Annemarie enjoys raising. She is qualified in permaculture design and training, Art and Craft.

Guest Presenters are selected from many fields for their practical skills and passion for sustainable systems.

Tours

You are welcome to visit The Food Forest. Tours may be as short or long as you like but we have found that 2 hours is a minimum to give you the opportunity to see the property and address your particular interests. We particularly welcome small groups, **schools** (any year level), agricultural bureaux, landcare groups, garden clubs, tertiary education classes and environmental groups.

We can tailor a tour to concentrate on any of the areas mentioned in our course descriptions. We are happy to design programs for **School and Uni Groups** from any year level & can make the visit relevant to subjects such as environmental studies, history, geography, social studies, agriculture, sciences, nutrition and economics.

Please contact us for more details and bookings.

TOURS ARE BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.

Awards & ABC TV

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, Contribution to Permaculture

2013 Winner, Barossa Regional Food Awards

Finalist SA Food Industry Award: PIRSA Regional Award

Graham: 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

2004 Winner Premier’s Food Awards Leadership in Sustainable Industry

2003 Winner Organic Federation of Australia National Award Best Organic



Spring '24–Autumn '25

Open Day: Saturday 12 Oct
“Wild River & Organic Farm”
walk & talk

Workshops

Building with Strawbales weekend
26 & 27 Oct

Growing your own Vegetables
Poultry in your Backyard
Sat 23 Nov

Introduction to Permaculture
Sun 24 Nov

Permaculture Design Certificate
April/May 2025

Download electronic course brochures from our website
(www.foodforest.com.au)

Wild River & Organic Farm Walk

Saturday 12 October, 2024



We have partnered with the Nature Festival SA for this event. Places are limited. AM & PM sessions. Bookings via Humanitix: [Wild River and Organic Farm Walk | Nature Festival SA](#)

Morning: Wild River & Farm Walk

10am sharp – 1pm. Booking is required!

Please arrive at 9.45am for registration, as this is a sequential, guided program that starts at 10am.

This guided tour takes you along the Gawler river, where it cuts its way through the Adelaide Plains creating cliffs, flooded flats, red gum forests and waterholes. You'll learn about the biodiversity borne by water in our dry environment and the history of land-use along the river.

You'll see the massive efforts of local people to restore the natural ecosystem destroyed by mining, and the introduction of exotic animals and prickly, poisonous plants. Thousands of native plants established by the community are naturalizing and indigenous wildlife are returning. You may well see or hear the web-footed Rakali, bearded dragons, Sacred Kingfishers and kookaburras.

Next to the river channel is The Food Forest, an awesome organic farm that produces vegetables, fruit, nuts and many other types of food and wine and relies on the beneficial birds and insects from the river corridor to control pests.

The farm walk will take you through the vegetable gardens, vineyards and orchards and demonstrates the integration of chickens, geese and mini-sheep to control weed and pasture growth in the orchards.

You will also be able to view passive solar designed buildings, built using strawbales, such as the extension to the heritage listed homestead, as well as seeing water capture projects and smart irrigation techniques.

Nature is important to South Australians and this tour provides a blueprint for community action as well as great day out.

Please note that we welcome children to come along but they **must be accompanied by a paying adult and need to be supervised at all times.**

Cost: \$22 (incl GST) + BF. Children under 12 free. No pets.

Sales of selected plants & produce will be available at the end of the tours.

See our website for more Food Forest info: www.foodforest.com.au

Booking is essential: [Wild River and Organic Farm Walk | Nature Festival SA](#). No tickets available at the gate.

Afternoon: Wild River & Farm Walk

2pm sharp – 5pm. Booking is required!

Please arrive at 1.45pm for registration, as this is a sequential, guided program that starts at 2pm

For event info, see the morning session info above

Booking: [Wild River and Organic Farm Walk | Nature Festival SA](#)

Workshops

Growing Your Own Vegetables & Herbs

Saturday 23 Nov, 9.00am – 12.30pm . \$75pp (+ BF)

<https://events.humanitix.com/grow-your-own-vegetables-half-day-workshop>

Growing high quality organic vegetables is not difficult once you do a bit of planning and understand the ecology of the garden.

This workshop will show you techniques for creating and managing a productive-garden, whatever the size. We will share with you how to design, plan & create resilient and productive systems. We will discuss the selection of vegetable species through the seasons, seeds & seedlings, bio-diversity and beneficial insects, irrigation, pest and disease management, mulching, composting and soil fertility. In our vegetable gardens you will see small wicking beds, raised garden beds and 'growing in the ground'.

Poultry in your backyard

Saturday 23 Nov, 1.30pm– 5.00pm . \$75pp (+ BF)

<https://events.humanitix.com/keeping-poultry-in-your-backyard-23nov2024>

The Chook is the world's original recycler and pest controller. We will share with you the basics of poultry husbandry. We will look at its housing, breed characteristics, supplementary feeding, keeping hens out of the lettuces and foxes out of the hens, managing pests and diseases in free-range flocks, rearing your own replacements, as well as chickens and geese in orchard management. You will also see our mobile 'chicken tractor'.

Introduction to Permaculture

Sun 24 Nov (8.45am - 5pm) \$125pp (+ BF)

<https://events.humanitix.com/introduction-to-permaculture-one-day-workshop-24nov2024>

Immerse yourself for the day in a concentrated introduction to the principles & techniques of this complete system for the sustainable design of homes, gardens, businesses, farms, waste re-use, economics, community development and energy management. The workshop will focus on positive and practical choices we can all make in our daily lives both at home and in the workplace, using permaculture design and action to make a difference and to create a more resilient and planet-friendly future for ourselves, neighbourhoods & workplaces.

You will be able to experience and 'see in action' appropriately designed passive solar structures, tools, equipment and growing systems on this organically certified property and solve some property design challenges using three-dimensional interactive modelling.

Building with Strawbales

Weekend 26, 27 Oct (8.45am - 5pm) \$550pp early-bird + BF

Strawbale houses, studios, barns and walls are easy to construct, environmentally responsible and cheap to run. They are beautiful and organic in form, strong and stable, and council approvable. In this weekend workshop we introduce you to the theory and design of strawbale building as well as actually building a structure. Principal tutor is Lance Kairl, SA's most experienced strawbale builder.

Architect Bohdan Dorniak and engineer Gerald Wittmann, both highly experienced in strawbale building, also present information sessions. All three are experienced in helping owner-builders

A detailed brochure is available on our website . Bookings essential.

Permaculture Design Certificate

April 23-27, May 9-11 & 24-25, 2025

This 10-day PDC course, spread out over 3 teaching blocks, will feature David Holmgren (co-originator of the permaculture concept), the Brookmans and other presenters.

A detailed brochure will be posted on our website in Spring. Please contact us to register your interest.

Bookings

We have partnered with Humanitix for bookings for our courses. Ticket sales will help donate funds to educational programs for children in need.

COVID

Events will be run according to SA Gov Covid guidelines.

Refunds & Cancellation

There is no refund available for the Open Day or 1- day courses. If you're unable to attend we encourage you to pass your place onto friends or family – alternatively you're welcome to put it towards one of our future courses.

If **we** need to cancel for any reason, a refund (minus an admin fee), will be issued for the workshops.

Farmers Market

The Food Forest sells its produce at the Adelaide Showground Farmers Market every fortnight. Info: www.adelaidefarmersmarket.com.au

YouTube~ Food Forest Channel

The Food Forest has over 30 micro movies on its YouTube Channel. Graham has been joined by experienced cinematographer/video editor Sam Collins to create the series of 'how to' videos, ranging from practical straw bale building techniques to controlling codling moth. See the films at <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheFoodForest>. Click on "Videos" on the Food Forest TV page to view all segments.

DVD and Virtual Tour

The movie 'Design for Life' introduces the concept of permaculture through the story of The Food Forest, David Holmgren and others. The documentary is supplemented by a 25min virtual tour of The Food Forest which explains how each enterprise works, from poultry to orchard and market garden to sustainable house. ~~It is available from our website.~~

Contact Details

W: www.foodforest.com.au **E:** info@foodforest.com.au **P:** 08 8522 6450

Workshops & Tours: 80 Clifford Rd, Hillier SA 5116

By train from Adelaide: Gawler line, exit Tambelin station (20 min walk, 10 min cycle, see www.adelaidemetro.com.au)