

Belfast Garden Club
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
JAN. 18, Noon to 1 p.m. via Zoom

Hügelkultur: Turn your spring and fall cleanup into abundant food gardens

By Teddy Mattson

Belfast Garden Club's Jan. 18 speaker series features Teddy Mattson discussing the benefits of hügelkultur, a traditional gardening method from Germany and Austria that translates to "mound garden." The presentation will be available through Zoom from noon to 1 p.m.

The process consists of building a mound of woody debris and burying it in soil. Mattson will explain the philosophy, ecological principles, and practical steps to building successful hügelkultur gardens out of landscape debris, from whole trees down to lawn clippings. He will also cover basic how-tos, tips and tricks for streamlining the process, and some pointers regarding what not to do including using invasive plants, messy construction, and building on steep slopes.

Mattson said there are several benefits to this style of gardening including a method by which to use up all landscape debris accumulated after spring or fall cleanup. "Everything you generate can be put to use," he said. Never send your brush and leaves to the burn pile or transfer station again.

The material will also soak up water and promote beneficial fungal growth. Mound gardening, he said, also increases square footage with three dimensions of surfaces as opposed to only one.

Mattson is the owner and operator of Dirtgoat Permaculture, the host of the Dirtgoat Permaculture Podcast, and a city of Belfast homesteader. He studied anthropology and sustainability at the University of Southern Maine where he first learned about permaculture as a strategy for addressing many of today's most pressing issues concerning the health and well-being of our species and planet.

Mattson explained the essence of permaculture is a design that attempts to mimic patterns found in nature to provide for all human needs including food, shelter, fiber, and fuel, without damage to the environment. "And hopefully restoring and regenerating it," he added.

He took his first permaculture design course in 2014 at Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association and an advanced permaculture design course in 2016 at The Resilience Hub in Portland. Since 2014 he has been consulting, designing, installing, and maintaining permaculture-inspired landscapes, while learning and doing more in terms of growing food for himself, friends, and family. He recently entered the realm of permaculture education through hands-on workshops at The Ecology Learning Center and at Triplet Park in Unity.

All Belfast Garden Club programs presented on Zoom are hosted by the Belfast Free Library. The Garden Club is grateful for their support and technical expertise in bringing these important events to the community. To register, visit BelfastGardenClub.org.

Captions:

•*Photo 1 - Hügelkultur is a traditional gardening method from Germany and Austria that translates to "mound garden" that uses cleanup debris and promotes beneficial fungal growth.*

•*Photo 2 - Teddy Mattson*

