

L.E.T.S. Lebanon

Issue #1

Hello Friends,

You are reading the pilot issue of L.E.T.S. Lebanon, a newsletter about living healthily, responsibly and sustainably. The idea for this newsletter was born during the first "Introduction to Permaculture" course held in Lebanon on the weekend of July 6-7, 2013 (see FEATURE STORY in this issue). L.E.T.S. stands for Local Energy Trading System, which is used to share skills and knowledge.

Each month or so, we will gather news from members of our growing community, as well as suggested readings and resources. We count on you to keep us informed with your news, photos and any interesting information you come across.

This is only a trial issue and we welcome any comments and suggestions regarding the content and design. The newsletter will evolve as we will.

Enjoy your reading.

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FEATURE STORY: INTRODUCTION TO PERMACULTURE



18 participants of different ages and backgrounds, coming from Lebanon, Mexico, Germany and the United States met on the weekend of **July 6-7** for the first **Introduction to Permaculture Workshop**, held in the village of **Saidoun**, caza of Jezzine.

The workshop focused on both theory and application. Presentations covered topics such as **Industrial vs. Organic Agriculture, Permaculture, Soils, Seeds, and Urban Strategies**. Practical work included **Garden Beds (Sheet Mulching), Composting** and **Hugelkulture**.

The participants also exchanged different seeds and had the chance to compare notes and share tips.

This was the first time the village of Saidoun hosted such an event and the residents were happy to share their houses and their food with their visitors. The workshop introduced a lot of possibilities for this remote area. A few of the villagers have already started making their own compost.

The workshop was organized in collaboration with the **Saidoun Agriculture Cooperative** with **Rita Khawand** (Actress/Recycling Artist) as coordinator.

The two instructors for the workshop were **Jose Dib** (Permaculturist - Mexico) and **Houssam Hawwa** (Environmental Manager - Lebanon).

Participants in the workshop included: **Estela Altenburg** (Permaculturist), **Wolfgang Altenburg** (Permaculturist/Carpenter), **Alexis Baghdadi** (Writer), **Jihad Chanehsaz** (Decorator), **Zeinab Charafeddine** (Journalist), **Ghinwa Daher** (Cinematographer), **Dany El-Chartouny** (Administrator), **Hanna Ibrahim** (Programmer), **Bassam Khawand** (Apiculturist), **Maha Kobeissy** (Administrator), **Tarek Nasr** (Permaculturist), **Jad Safar** (Photographer), **Alec Seferian** (Stage Manager), **Greg Shaheen** (Geologist), **Dina Yazbeck** (Restaurant Owner).



UPCOMING EVENTS

► INTERNATIONAL BAT NIGHT



Saturday August 24
4:00 p.m.
Animal Encounter
Wildlife Conservation
Center
Aley, Ras El Jabal
03-667354/5
05-558724

https://www.facebook.com/events/343326625800274/?notif t=plan_user_joined

► RANDONNÉE MUSICALE



Sunday August 25
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Shouf Cedar Nature
Reserve
Maasser El Shouf
05-350250
05-350150

<https://www.facebook.com/events/156011101261290/>

► JABALNA FESTIVAL



Sunday September 1
8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Barouk - Maasser El
Shouf
Transportation from
Beirut, Roumieh,
Barouk
05-350250

<https://www.jabalnafestival.com>



SAVE PAPER – Do you really need to print this newsletter?

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LET'S PLANT SOME HOPE



On the weekend of **August 10-11**, we organized a campaign to encourage people to invade the streets and the corners of Lebanon with plants and trees. We created a Facebook page titled "**Let's Plant Some Hope**", and hung posters in the pubs of Mar Mikhael, Gemmayzeh, Hamra and Jounieh. We asked people to choose a spot anywhere they like (in front of their

house, on their rooftop or balcony, on the highway, etc.) and plant a shrub, flower or tree of their choice there. They then had to watch **hope grow**, and remember to water it from time to time. The aim was to start making a difference to invade the city with green and spread awareness by showing how simple it is to plant either at home or in the street.



Photos of the plantings were shared on the Facebook event page. Those people who did participate were sowing the hope that the future will see more efforts and encouragement. Planters were from different parts of the country: **Beirut (Chiah, Forn El Chebbak, Ashrafieh, etc.), Adonis, Zouk, Saidoun (Jezzine), Dhour El Choueir and elsewhere.**

We will hold future events inspired by the "guerrilla gardening movement", hoping to create more green spaces, and for green life to invade the concrete buildings – not the other way around.

https://www.facebook.com/plantsomehope?notif_t=fbpage_fan_invite

Shared by Ghinwa Daher, Alicia Fahed, Mirella Salameh

SARI'S ROOFTOP GARDEN



(geraniums, rosemary, wild thyme, basil, sage, parsley, coriander, mint, arugula, tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplants, bell peppers, hot peppers, berries, and a lemon tree).

I wrote an article about this roof on my blog <http://sarisattic.com/2013/07/03/mission-green-roofus/> for my projects and ideas. Do get in touch; I'd love to get in touch.

Right now, I am taking a Natural Building Certificate in the Yestermorrow school - Vermont, USA (www.yestermorrow.org). The course is amazing. I'm learning a lot and look forward to share my knowledge and help build stuff in Lebanon or elsewhere!

Shared by Sari Hawa

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SAIDOUN ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE DAY



On August 17, we organized the **Environment and Agriculture Day** with the **Saidoun Agricultural Cooperative** in the village of **Saidoun**. The day included several agriculture and awareness activities. Visitors from different parts of the country, as well as from the **United States and France**, had the chance to discover life in the village, buy local products (mouneh, soap, crafts) and engage in different activities. Children recycled tetra paks to build birdfeeders, and took home rosemary plants in their own planters. Visitors also had a demonstration about beekeeping and got the chance to sample local honey. Almost everyone in the village was involved at different levels, from organizing to cooking, welcoming guests or sorting garbage for recycling.



The aim was to prepare for the launching of a **local market** on weekends that would sell vegetables, fruits, food and mouneh, grown/made by partner farmers and women from the village who agreed to plant and prepare food following standards set by the cooperative. We were able to determine who the people willing to work with us were and what products they could produce. It also helped them get a clearer idea of the commitment that would be required of them. Feedback from the villagers and visitors was very encouraging.

Shared by Bassam Khawand and Rita Khawand

GREEN RESOURCES

▶ PERMACULTURE MAGAZINE



This quarterly publication provides updates, ideas, advice and inspiration for sustainable living.

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