

Our Gardens Our Water



Organic Gardening for Nantucket

The Nantucket Land Council, Inc.
6 Ash Lane ~ PO Box 502
Nantucket, MA 02554
508-228-2818
www.nantucketlandcouncil.org



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Gardens & Water

Our Drinking Water

Nantucket's drinking water comes from a sole source aquifer. We don't have a backup. That is why it is so important to protect it. One easy, affordable step that you can take is to switch to organic land care practices that carefully evaluate the fertilizers and soil amendments used on the land.

Your Lawn, Our Water

When rain falls, or when you irrigate your garden, excess fertilizers and pesticides will leach down into our sandy soils, eventually flowing into the ocean, a harbor, a pond or a drinking water well. The direction of the water flow on your property determines which "watershed" area you live in.

The Nantucket Land Council has mapped all the watersheds on Nantucket. You can find out which body of water, for example Madaket Harbor or Hummock Pond, the water under your house is flowing toward. Call us for a watershed map & brochure, or see it online at www.nantucketlandcouncil.org.

Fertilizers and Water

Fertilizers, even more than pesticides, are one of the biggest threats to Nantucket's water quality and our historic shellfishing industry. Excess nutrients from fertilizers that flow from gardens into ponds and harbors cause enormous algae blooms which disrupt the ecosystem, killing eelgrass and aquatic plant life, reducing oxygen in the water, and eventually killing scallops, fish and other marine life. Fortunately, the science and culture behind organic gardening have progressed rapidly, and organic no longer means having a brown lawn that is full of weeds. With today's techniques, your lawn and garden can be both "green" and beautiful.

Going Organic

NOFA accredited organic landscapers

As part of the Nantucket Land Council's efforts to encourage organic gardening, we have given over \$20,000 in scholarships to local landscapers to become accredited in organic practices. Scholarship recipients attended the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) 5-day accreditation course. To learn more about organic gardening, call our office, visit www.organiclandcare.net or contact one of the professionals listed in this guide.



About The Nantucket Land Council, Inc.

Founded in 1974, the NLC is a 501 (c)(3) environmental non-profit on Nantucket Island. Dedicated to the protection of our natural resources, the NLC is an environmental watchdog group on Nantucket.

The NLC holds and enforces conservation restrictions, commissions scientific research, monitors development proposals, distributes grants and scholarships, engages in legal proceedings, and educates the public on local environmental issues.

For more information on the NLC's activities, or to become a member, call 508-228-2818 or visit our site: www.nantucketlandcouncil.org.



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Steps to get started

Start with a soil test

The foundation of organic gardening starts with healthy soil. The first step in determining the needs of your soil is to perform a soil test. Contact the UMASS extension program for more information at (413) 545-2311. The soil test will provide you with the necessary information on the principal soil parameters and explain any deficiencies that need to be corrected.

The soil is alive

Organic practices are based on feeding the soil and not the plant. Conventional chemical theory is to provide the nutrients right to the plant, bypassing the needs of the soil. After repeated application of salt laden chemicals, the soil becomes lifeless and sterile, unable to feed plants.



Compost is black gold

Compost builds organic matter content in the soil, which provides a healthy and supportive environment for the essential microorganisms that inhabit it. These organisms in turn provide the essential nutrients for plant growth and the entire soil food chain. Healthy soil means healthy plants and a beautiful garden.

Know your garden

If you don't tend to the garden yourself, speak directly with your landscaper to understand and learn the ins and outs of your garden, as well as the products currently being applied to your lawn and garden. A half hour conversation is all it takes to get started. If you are looking for a landscaper, we recommend one of the NOFA accredited landscapers listed here.



Garden photos by Taylor Cullen for Moontree Gardens and by Emily Dutra for Jesse Dutra Landscaping. Nantucket aerial photo by Dan Hall.

2008-2009 Accredited Organic Landscapers

Baranda Wilcox
Amy Pallenberg Garden Design
PO Box 3175
Nantucket, MA 02584
508-560-7117
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Natalie Marcus
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David Huehner & Chris Oberg
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Bradley MacDonald & Eric Verney
Ernst Land Design, Inc.
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Jenne Atherton-Verney
Grey Lady Gardens
PO Box 3546
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508-257-7068
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Chapin Klein
Maskell Landscaping
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Sarah Van Lieu
Moon Tree Gardens
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*Fern = Exclusively organic land care professional.
Landscapers are listed alphabetically by business.*

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Kathryn Haigh and Dane Decarlo
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