

Episode 2: Dynamic Organics

In episode 2, host and landscape architect Meg West investigates what you need to know to garden organically on a residential or commercial scale.

Why garden organically? Meg West starts off the episode with an interview with Oscar Carmona of Healing Grounds Nursery. The key to a healthy garden is healthy soil. An organic garden creates healthy soil in a sustainable way. Unlike synthetic fertilizers, which can be harmful to soil quality, organic gardening relies on compost and mulch.



Want to make your own garden organic? Meg West takes you to Island Feed and Seed to learn about organically certified products to help maintain your organic garden. Look for the OMRI label.



With the help of Sarah Kitson of Kitson Landscaping, Meg explains the basics of maintaining an organic garden on a commercial scale. One of the major challenges addressed is how to keep a commercial garden looking good all the time. This means no debris from plant trimmings, or visible compost piles. They also provide a few tips on how to fight pests and fungus on your plants.



Some commercial and residential properties in Santa Barbara have lawns. Although lawns require many resources, there are many ways to maintain them organically. Meg and Nico Lobero of Rincon Landscaping give tips on maintaining an organic lawn in this segment. A simple change like leaving grass clippings on the lawn both fertilizes it and allows for more water retention.

A visit to the Santa Barbara Firescape Demonstration Garden focuses on fire safety through appropriate planting. Landscape designers Jennifer Voss and Arianna Jansma are responsible for the re-design of the demonstration garden's Zone 1 area. In this segment, the landscape designers explain the four fire zones, and what to plant in them. This knowledge could save your home from fire damage.



In “What Tree Is That?” Randy Baldwin, general manager at San Marcos Growers, talks about the Brazilian Cedarwood. This tree is ideal for street planting. Not only is this tree drought tolerant, its roots won’t break through the concrete above them and ruin the sidewalk. As a result, this species is often found lining the streets of Santa Barbara.

This episode’s “Plant Rant” focuses on the Yucca. This classic water wise plant is a favorite of landscape architects for its beauty and structure. Both this plant’s form and function make it ideal for planting in Santa Barbara.