Growing Food Security on 600m²

Suburban Sufficiency in Subtropical Brisbane

Why This Matters Now

Supply Chain Fragility

Local emergency events, Global shipping disruptions, fuel crises, and geopolitical tensions can empty supermarket shelves within days

Rising Food Costs

Food inflation outpacing wages — fresh produce prices up 20-40% in many categories over the past 2 years and set to continue rising, while quality of nutrition decreases

The Suburban Opportunity

A standard 600m² block has enough space to produce around 60-80% of a household's fresh food needs year-round in Brisbane.

The 600m² - 12 month study

120+ Food-Producing Plant Varieties (60+ trees/shrubs)

85% Produce eaten was collected from the garden

6 Poultry (Chooks/Ducks)

600m² Standard Suburban Block, with 2 story house in Redlands

What 600m² Looks Like

Every square metre has a purpose — even the driveway has plans for the grape arbor to provide shade and fruiting space

Permaculture Foundations

Why designed ecosystems outperform conventional gardens

The Permaculture Advantage

Conventional Garden

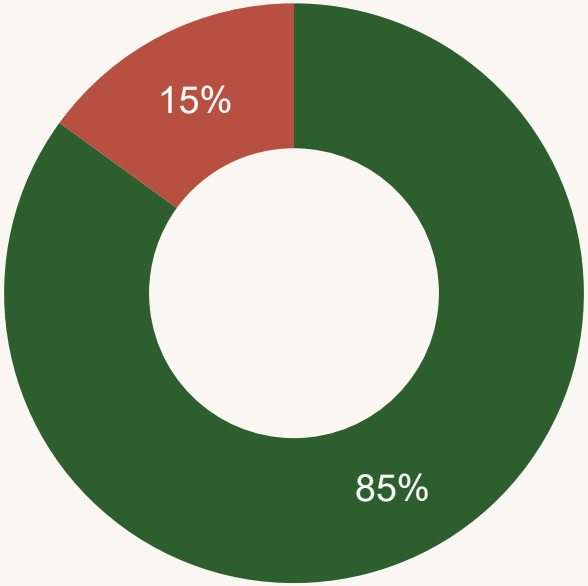
- Traditional Row crops take up space
- Requires higher rates of fertiliser & water inputs
- Monoculture = pest vulnerability
- Labour-intensive year-round
- Production stops when you stop working
- High weed pressure
- Lower soil fertility and soil food web
- Typically annual crops in singular timed plantings resulting in glut and famine cycle

Permaculture System

- Perennials produce food for decades
- Annuals self seed and create a soil seed bank, no need to replant as many
- Builds soil fertility naturally over time
- Diversity = built-in pest management
- Increased soil food web and plant resilience
- Less work as system matures (Year 3+)
- Continues producing even with minimal input

By the 3rd year we were producing 60-70% of our fresh food needs, compared with only 30% in the first year
By year 4 we were producing 70-85% and now in year 6 we are producing steadily at 80-85%

Current Production Snapshot



Still purchasing dairy, meat, grains

Fruits & Nuts (over 60 trees)

Apple, Pear, Lemon, Mandarin, Orange, Cumquat, Mango, Jaboticaba, Avocado, Banana, Nectarine, Peach, Plum, Cherry, Mulberry, Blueberry, Elderberry, Raspberry, Jackfruit, Custard apple, Passionfruit, Coffee, Pecan, Macadamia, Cocoa, Strawberry, Pineapple, Peanut

Annuals – Watermelon, Rock melon, Peanuts, Rosella

Vegetables

Root crops: Onions (bunching and bulb), Garlic, Carrot, Beetroot, Swede, Turnip, Radish, Arrowroot, Taro, Yacon, Sunchoke, potato, sweet potato, Cassava

Leafy crops: Lettuce, Cabbage, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Tatsio, Pak choy, Choy Sum, Dandelion, Rocket, Climbing spinach, leek, Mustard,

Seed crops: Peas, Beans (green & dried) Lentils, Chia, Amaranth, Corn, Sesame, Sunflower

Fruiting crops: Tomato, Eggplant, Pumpkins, Gourd, Luffa, Capsicum, Squash, Zucchini

Herbs & Spices

Turmeric, Ginger, Lemongrass, Basil, Coriander, Oregano, Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, Lavender, Chives, Cummin, Carraway, Mint, Spearmint, Marshmallow, Plantain, Nettle, Meadowsweet, Wasabi, Vanilla,

Eggs

Chook & duck eggs cover household protein needs daily, plan for Quail

Preserved & baked

Jams, pickles, ferments, dried fruits, frozen produce, sourdoughs, pasta, baked treats, herb butters and oils

Shifting Plantings for Food Sufficiency

Ornamental edges	→	**Herbs, small choys and loose leaf lettuces provide colour and decoration, onions for tall structural leaves**
Single-use lawn strips	→	**turn grass into food production, start small work one section at time**
Low-calorie salad-only beds	→	**50/50 salad + starchy root crops, intercrop, eat leaves from beetroot, radish and roots from parsley, add verticals for beans and peas,**
Decorative fruit trees	→	**High-yield calorie trees (jackfruit, banana, mango)**
Empty fence lines	→	**Passionfruit trellises, beans, climbing spinach, kiwi.**

Small, strategic swaps — not a complete garden overhaul

Closing the Calorie Gap

Shifting from shop produce to food sufficiency

The Calorie Gap — What's Missing

Growing 85% of fresh produce ≠ 85% of total Calorie needs

Calories (energy)	Most of the volume of garden produce is low-calorie — leafy greens, tomatoes, herbs. A family needs 2,000-2,500 cal/day per person for moderate activity.
Carbohydrates	Rice, wheat, rye, spelt, barley— currently bought. Need more starchy root crops & grain alternatives to replace these, or a space to grow some grains (neighbours or community garden)
Fats & Oils	Cooking oils, butter, lard — currently all purchased. Tree crops like macadamia, avocado can fill some of this gap, and eggs do help, but they can't fulfill the full need. Growing more peanuts for oil will assist
Protein	Beyond eggs — dried beans, pigeon pea, peanuts, pecans and macadamias, and potentially quail/guinea pig meat if it comes to that, but there are nutrients we need from meat (if we aren't buying supplements)

The goal: add calorie-dense crops WITHOUT removing what's already working

Calorie-Dense Crops for Brisbane

Tier 1 — Highest Return per m²

Crop	Cal/m²	Brisbane Season
Sweet Potato	2,000–4,000	Sep–Mar (year-round is possible, and grows well in pots)
Cassava	3,000–5,000	Year-round plant, 8-12mo harvest
Taro / Eddoe	1,500–3,000	Spring–Autumn, loves moisture pots work best for all year growing
QLD Arrowroot	1,500–2,500	Year-round, shade tolerant, grows well in pots for easy harvest
Dried Beans	1,000–2,000	All year depending on varieties
Peanuts	1000-2000	All year, though slower in winter. Perfect for pots

These crops slot into existing garden beds, edges, and understories, and pots and most will self propagate if left.

Stacking Calories in Layers

Permaculture food forest layers — each producing food

7 layers of food production in the same footprint — that's the power of permaculture

Protein & Fat Crops for the Subtropics

Protein Sources

- Pigeon Pea — perennial, nitrogen-fixing, drought-hardy
- Lablab Bean — tropical legume, high protein dried beans
- Snake Bean / Winged Bean — prolific in heat
- Sunflower Seeds — grow in any gap, protein + fat
- Peanut – Protein and oil

Fat & Oil Sources

- Macadamia — Brisbane native! 75% fat, stores well
- Avocado — seasonal but heavy-bearing at maturity
- Pecan — suits SEQ climate, long-term investment, deciduous shade tree
- Sesame — annual, easy to grow, press for oil
- Sunflower — dual purpose protein + fat
- Peanut – Oil and nitrogen fixing

These fill the nutritional gaps that leafy greens and fruit can't cover

Homegrown Produce — More Nutrient Dense

Why Homegrown Wins

- **Vine-ripened** produce develops more vitamins, antioxidants and flavour compounds than fruit picked green and gas-ripened in transit
- **Eaten the same day** — no supply chain degradation. Shop produce can be 7–14 days from harvest before it reaches your plate
- **Healthier soil** from composting and diverse planting increases mineral uptake compared to depleted commercial soils and makes nutrients more bio-available for us
- **Heirloom varieties** chosen for flavour and nutrition, not bred for shelf life and transport durability like commercial cultivars

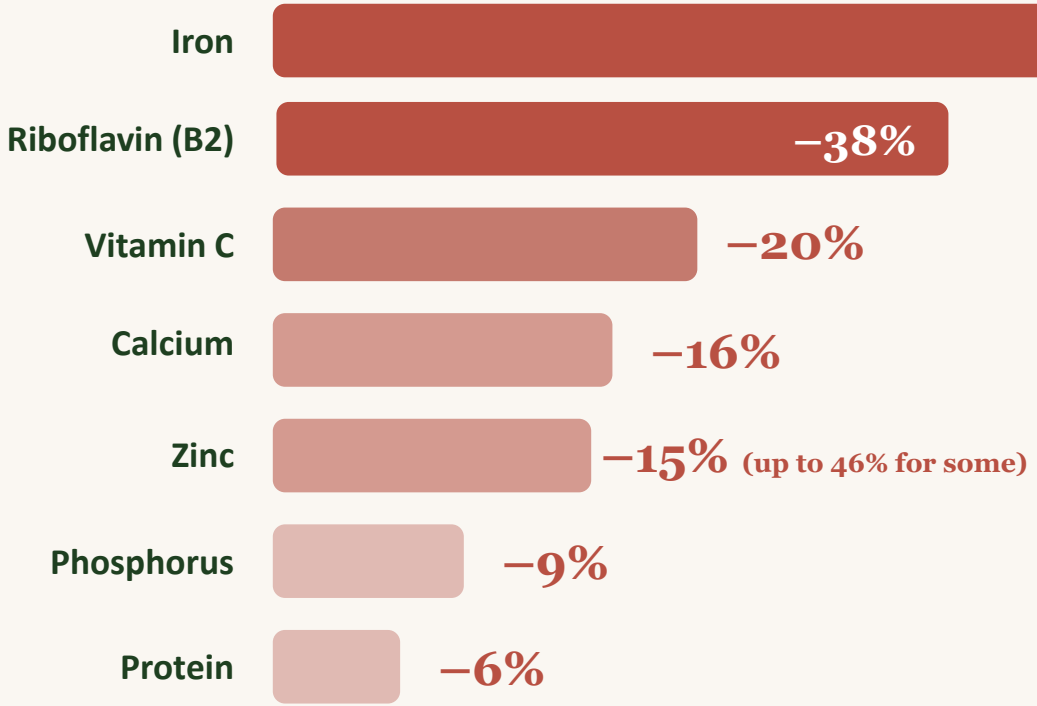
The Research

- **Vitamin C:** Spinach loses ~80% of its ascorbic acid within just 3 days of refrigerated storage (Food Chemistry)
- **Tomatoes:** Vine-ripened have 30%+ more lycopene, sugars and key amino acids than gas-ripened store tomatoes (PLOS ONE)
- **Long-term decline:** USDA data across 43 crops (1950–1999) shows protein down 6%, riboflavin down 38%, plus declines in calcium, phosphorus and iron
- **Flavour = nutrition:** Phenols and flavonoids that create better flavour are the same compounds linked to lower disease risk

The freshest produce is always the most nutritious — and nothing is fresher than your own backyard

Nutrient Decline in Commercial Crops

USDA data across 43 garden crops, 1950–1999 (Davis et al., Journal of the American College of Nutrition)
CSIRO (1991-2022) data on commercial food composition decline



Why this matters

Modern commercial varieties were bred for yield, shelf life and appearance — not nutrition.

Growing heirloom and heritage varieties at home sidesteps 50+ years of nutrient dilution in the commercial food supply.

Combined with same-day harvest and healthy soil, homegrown produce delivers significantly more nutrition per gram feeding your body better and creating physical health benifits.

Every nutrient shown here is higher in homegrown produce and higher in fresh from healthy soil

Boosting Nutrition from the Ground Up

Healthy soil → thriving microbes → nutrient-dense plants → healthier humans

700 x
root reach

12+
brix target

Feed the Soil Microbes

Mycorrhizal fungi extend root surface area by **up to 700x**, enabling mineral uptake impossible through roots alone. They boost phosphorus uptake by **30–50%** and are destroyed by intensive tillage.

Measure It with Brix

Brix measures dissolved solids — sugars, minerals, amino acids — in plant sap. A reading of **12+** means a plant packed with nutrients and secondary metabolites — with natural pest and disease resistance. High brix = high nutrition.

Healthier Plant = Healthier You

Regenerative crops show consistently higher concentrations of iron, zinc, calcium, magnesium, vitamin C and polyphenols across **3,000+ peer-reviewed studies**.

Antioxidant levels in the same crop variety can vary **up to 200-fold** depending on soil biology and farming method.

Soil organic matter above **3.5%** correlates with measurably higher mineral content in crops

Better nutrition from the same calories = healthier you

Boost the soil, boost the microbes, boost the plant, boost yourself

The Soil Food Web

Bacteria

First trophic level. 10–100 million per gram of healthy soil. Decompose organic residues, mineralise N/P/K into plant-available ionic forms, and produce biofilm exudates that aggregate soil particles.

Saprophytic Fungi

Hyphal networks decompose complex lignin and cellulose that bacteria cannot. Release organic acids that solubilise rock-bound phosphorus and micronutrients (Zn, Cu, Mn). Produce glomalin, a glycoprotein that binds soil aggregates.

Protozoa & Nematodes

Bacterial-feeding protozoa and nematodes excrete excess nitrogen as NH4+ directly in the rhizosphere — precisely where roots absorb it. This predator–prey cycling can supply 40–80% of a plant's nitrogen demand.

Arthropods & Earthworms

Physically fragment organic matter, increasing surface area for microbial colonisation. Earthworm casts boost available N by 5x and P by 7x vs surrounding soil.

Root Exudates

Plants invest 20–40% of photosynthetic carbon into root exudates — sugars, amino acids, organic acids — recruiting beneficial microbes in the rhizosphere.

Nutrient Cycling

A biologically active soil food web retains 80–90% of nutrients in biomass, releasing them on-demand as organisms are consumed. Conventional systems lose 50–70% through leaching and volatilisation.

Mycorrhizal Fungi

The Underground Internet of Your Garden

- AMF colonise 80–90% of terrestrial plant species, forming symbiotic bonds with root cortex cells
- Hyphal networks extend root absorption by 100–1,000x, accessing water and minerals far beyond root reach
- Fungi trade P, Zn, Cu, and water for 10–20% of the plant's photosynthetic carbon
- CMN connect neighbouring plants, enabling nutrient and chemical signal transfer between species
- Glomalin from AMF stores up to 30% of soil carbon, improving structure and water retention
- Tillage, synthetic P fertilisers, and fungicides destroy these networks — biological management preserves them

Composting & Chop-and-Drop

Feeding Soil Life from the Surface Down

Chop-and-Drop Mulching Cut green material and leave it where it falls. Surface decomposition feeds fungi first, then bacteria — mimicking forest-floor nutrient cycling without disturbing soil structure.

Compost Systems Hot composting (55–65°C) accelerates decomposition and kills pathogens (like in the chook poop). Worm farms add vermicast that boosts microbial activity 4–5x over raw compost.

Soil Diversity Explodes Diverse carbon inputs (leaves, stems, roots, manure) support diverse biology. Each material feeds different organisms — variety in the mulch means variety in the soil.

Fungal-to-Bacterial Ratio Woody mulch and chop-and-drop shift soil toward fungal dominance (F:B ratio 2:1+), which fruit trees and perennials prefer for nutrient access.

The Brix Feedback Loop

High-Brix Plants Build the Biology That Grows High-Brix Plants

1. Richer Root Exudates

High-brix plants photosynthesise more efficiently, channelling 20–40% of carbon into complex root exudates — sugars, amino acids, and organic acids.

2. More Diverse Biology

Complex exudates recruit a wider range of bacteria, fungi, and protozoa. More species means more metabolic pathways and greater nutrient-mining capacity.

3. Superior Nutrient Delivery

Diverse microbes solubilise minerals locked in rock and organic matter — delivering P, Zn, Cu, Mn, and trace elements directly to plant roots on demand.

4. Even Higher Brix

Better-nourished plants photosynthesise harder, producing more sugars and more complex sap. Brix climbs, pest resistance strengthens, and the cycle accelerates.

Composting accelerates the loop: High-brix leaf litter and chop-and-drop from healthy plants contain more minerals and complex carbon than low-brix material. When this returns to the soil as mulch or compost, it feeds a richer biology that produces even healthier plants.

Brix, Pest Resistance & How to Measure

How to Measure Leaf Brix

1. Squeeze leaf sap
Crush a leaf with pliers or a garlic press. Place 2–3 drops of sap onto the refractometer prism.

2. Read the scale
Close the daylight plate, point toward light. The brix scale shows dissolved solids — sugars, minerals, amino acids.

3. Track weekly/monthly
Morning readings (10am) are most consistent. Log results to see how soil biology, compost teas, and foliar sprays shift brix over time.

Why it works: insects can only digest simple sugars, they have no pancreas. As brix rises, plant sap becomes increasingly complex — lipids, proteins, complete minerals. Above 12 brix, most pest insects literally cannot metabolise the sap, so they move on to weaker plants.

12+
Pest Resistance Threshold

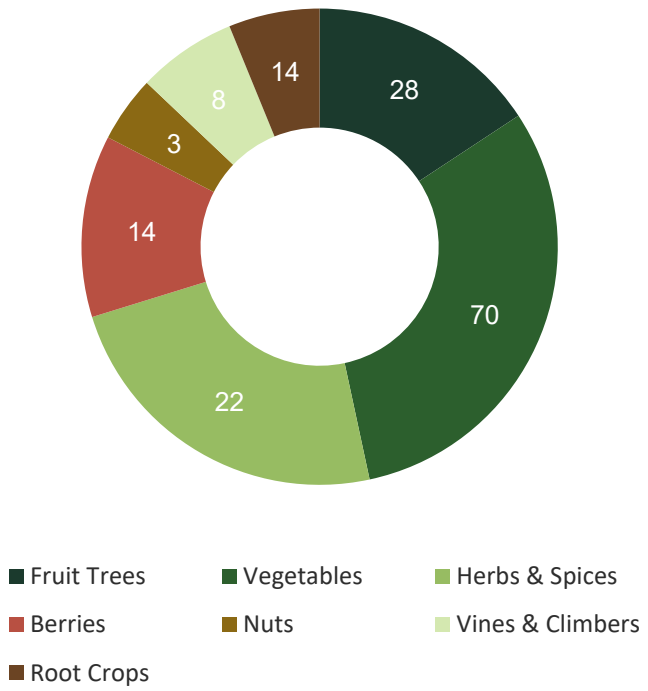
3-6
Conventional Produce

14+
Near Pest-Free Zone

~80%
Fewer Pest Attacks

Higher brix = more nutrient-dense food for you and less palatable sap for pests. Feed the soil biology, and the plants defend themselves.

Biodiversity Explosion



Beyond the 120 Food Plants

- **30**+ species of beneficial insects recorded, some not recorded as still waiting identification
- **15** species of native birds now visiting (one nesting)
- Soil fungi networks connect all garden beds
- Native bee populations thriving on year-round flowers (and euro bees)
- **5** Lizards, **3** frogs species have boosted populations
- Pollination rates higher than first year growing

The Animal Partners

Poultry & small livestock in the permaculture system

Chooks: The Multi-Taskers

1. **Pest Control**

   Consumes bugs around the garden and when we catch grasshoppers

2. **Soil Preparation**

   Scratch and turn compost, break down mulch, aerate topsoil in portable runs,

3. **Fertiliser Factory**

   Produce 30kg+ of nitrogen-rich manure per year — hot composted before application min 6 months

4. **Egg Production**

   4-6 hens produce 600+ eggs per year for the household

5. **Weed and Waste Management**

   Targeted rotational grazing in garden beds clears weeds and weed seeds, chook compost for dumping edible weeds and waste in

Ducks: The not so quiet achievers

Why ducks complement chooks perfectly:

Slug & Snail Specialists

Ducks eat more slugs and snails than chooks — they're the #1 biological control, without turning the soil

Rich Eggs

Duck eggs are larger, richer in omega-3s, and prized by bakers 4-6 ducks 600+ eggs per year

Helps Eat Excess Plants

Like chooks, ducks will eat excess raw greens, fruit and cooked veg, turning it into fertaliser

Wet Area Champions

Thrive in boggy areas where chooks won't go — perfect for the swale zones or shady areas

Mosquito Control

Consume mosquito larvae from water features and rain barrels, keep water moving

Calm Temperament

Slightly quieter than chooks, depending on breed

Duck and Chook management

Year 1

3 Chooks

First poultry, easier to set up, 3 for company, September born chicks, preferably sexed

Year 2 or 3

3 Ducks

Addition of pond for liquid fertiliser (aerated), September born ducklings, preferably sexed

Year 3 or 4

Additional 2-3 Chooks

First chooks now 2-3yrs old and slowing down production, new chooks boost egg production

Year 4 or 6

Additional 2-3 Ducks

First Ducks now 2-3 years old and like the chooks are slowing down, new ducks boost egg production

Repeat alternating additional poultry as other age out

Breeds I recommend

Chooks – Australorp, Barnevelder, Rhode Is

Ducks –Khaki Campbell, Indian runner, Welsh harlequin

Guinea Pigs: the Pezz dispenser

Why Guinea Pigs just work:

They eat grass

Where the ducks and chooks eat small amounts, the guinea pigs can keep it down low and vibrant

Companionship

Guinea pigs make great starter animals for kids, giving them something warm and furry to cuddle and learn care for

Helps Eat Excess Plants

Like chooks and ducks will eat produce, and leaves turning it into fertiliser

Small space

Guinea pigs can be housed in smaller spaces then chooks or ducks

Cold fertiliser

Like goats, Guinea pigs produce a cold fertiliser, you can add straight to non edible areas like grass areas or hot compost for 3-6 months

Quick Meat

Traditional protein source in South America. Dense, flavourful meat — one guinea pig feeds 2 people for a meal. Quick breeding cycle.

Quail — The Plan Ahead

Why Coturnix Quail?

Mature in 6-8 weeks. Hens lay 250-300 eggs/year. Quiet — neighbours won't notice.

Space Efficient

A cage of 12 quail fits in 1m². That's 3,000+ eggs per year from a tiny footprint.

Dual Purpose

Eggs AND meat. Quail eggs are nutrient-dense — higher protein per gram than chicken eggs.

Brisbane Friendly

Classified as poultry — counts toward permit. Heat tolerant but need shade in summer. They are messy so not best for inside

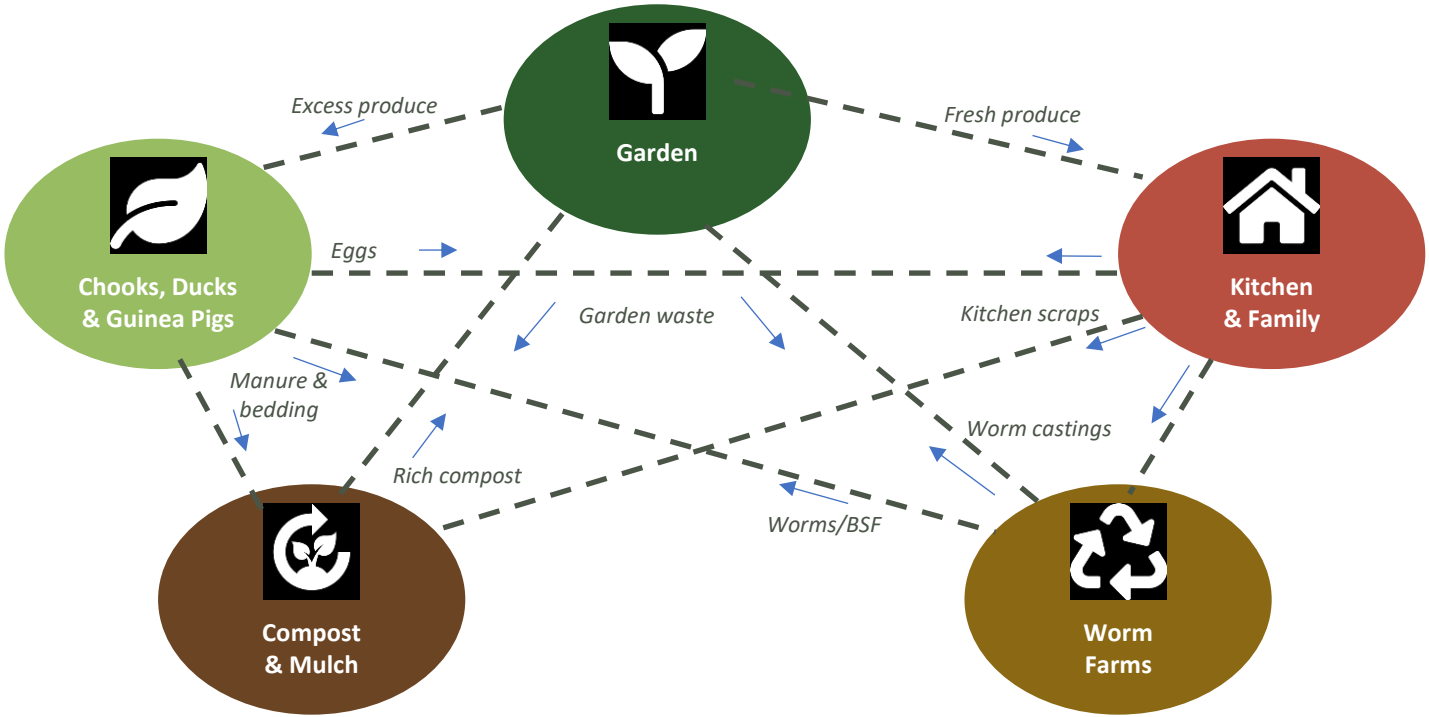
Worm Farms

The Soil Factory/ Food factory

- Process kitchen scraps daily
- Produce 500+ litres of worm castings per year
- Worm extract applied as liquid fertiliser
- Vermicast increases soil microbial activity by 4-5x
- Castings improve water retention by up to 50%
- great source of BSF and Worms for a protein hit

Closing the Loop

Every Output Becomes an Input



Preserving Without Power

Adapting techniques for grid-independent food storage

The Preservation Challenge

Current methods vs. power-loss scenarios

- A full freezer = liability without power (thaws in 24-48hrs)
- Electric dehydrators stop working
- Refrigerated ferments need monitoring
- Modern canning often assumes electric stove/oven or access to purchased gas

The shift: move from power-dependent to power-independent methods

- Solar dehydration — Brisbane has 260+ sunny days
- Lacto-fermentation — no power needed, just salt
- Water-bath canning — gas or rocket stove
- Salt curing & smoking — ancient, reliable

Solar & Traditional Dehydration

Solar Dehydrator (DIY)	Build from timber, glass/polycarbonate, and mesh screens. Brisbane sun hits 40-60°C inside — perfect drying temperature. Cost: under $50 in materials. Just need to protect from insects
Sun Drying	Traditional method for herbs, chillies, tomatoes. Use mesh screens elevated off ground. Cover with muslin against fruit fly. Best in dry winter months.
What to Dehydrate	Herbs (all year) • Mango & banana chips (summer) • Tomatoes & capsicums (autumn/winter) • Chillies (all year) • Apple & pear slices • Sweet potato chips • Beans, Peas & legumes for storage
Storage	Vacuum seal in glass jars or mylar bags, dry can if possible. Properly dried food stores 6-12 months at room temperature. Moisture content must be below 10-20% depending on food type.

Brisbane's climate can be a dehydrating asset — use it at the right times

Fermentation — Your Best Friend

No power, no special equipment, no pressure canner needed

Sauerkraut & Kimchi	Cabbage + salt. Ready in 1-4 weeks. Stores 6+ months in a cool spot.	*Probiotics, vitamin C, preserves brassicas*
Fermented Hot Sauce	Chillies + salt + time. Brisbane grows chillies year-round.	*Preserves glut, adds flavour to everything*
Water Kefir / Kombucha	Sugar water + culture. Continuous brew with minimal effort.	*Probiotic drinks from garden fruit*
Preserved Lemons	Lemons + salt. Pack tight, wait 4 weeks. Last 12+ months.	*Uses citrus glut, incredible flavour*
Fermented Pickles	Any veg + salt brine. Cucumbers, beans, carrots, radishes.	*No vinegar needed, true preservation*

Brisbane's warm climate accelerates fermentation — a subtropical advantage adjust ferment times accordingly

Curing, Smoking & Canning

Salt Curing

- 10-20% salt concentration kills most bacteria
- Eggs preserved in salt last months or 12 months in lime (waterglass)
- Salt-cured fish (if bartering)
- Jerky from any lean meat — air dry or solar

Smoking

- Hot smoking cooks + preserves
- Cold smoking for longer storage
- DIY smoker from old drum/fridge
- Smoke eggs, meat, fish, garlic

Water Bath Canning

- High-acid foods only (pH < 4.6) must pressure can low acid foods
- Jams, pickles, tomato sauce, fruit cordials, relish
- Use gas stove or outdoor rocket stove
- Properly sealed jars last 1 years (can last longer just not approved)

Master one technique well before adding the next - Water canning is the best starting point, then ferments

Brisbane Preservation Calendar

Season	Harvest Gluts	Preservation Method	Without Power
Summer (Dec-Feb)	Mango, banana, cherry tomato, cucumber, apples	Dehydrate, ferment, chutney, sauce, pie apples, relish	Solar dry, fermented pickles, sun-dry tomato, water bath canning
Autumn (Mar-May)	Citrus, capsicum, sweet potato, passionfruit, zucchini dried beans/peas	Preserve lemons, sundried capsicums, cure sweet potato, pickle zucchini	Salt-preserve, air dry, fruit leather in sun, water bath canning pickles
Winter (Jun-Aug)	Brassicas, leafy greens, herbs, root vegetables, tomato,	Sauerkraut, kimchi, herb drying, Passata and whole/diced tomatoes	Ferment, hang-dry herbs, root cellar store, water bath can tomatoes
Spring (Sep-Nov)	Strawberry, mulberry, early stone fruit, dried beans/peas	Jam, fruit wine, Dehydrate	Solar dry, water-bath can jams

Plan your preservation around seasonal gluts — don't let food go to waste

Building Resilience

Water, community, and long-term planning

Water Security on a Suburban Block

Rainwater Tanks

Brisbane avg 1,100mm rain/year. A 100m² roof catches 110,000L. Even 2 × 5,000L tanks provide significant buffer.

Greywater Diversion

Laundry and bathroom water to fruit trees via subsurface irrigation. Use plant-friendly detergents. Legal in QLD with subsurface system.

Mulch & Soil

Deep mulch reduces watering by 50-70%. Healthy soil = sponge. Every cm of organic matter holds 60,000L/ha more water.

Swales

Capture runoff on contour. Slow, spread, sink. Even small swales on a suburban block make a measurable difference.

Studies on capturing mist using fine netting and inground reservoirs show they can capture 10% of the moisture in the air within 2 hrs of reaching dew temp

Saving Heirloom Varieties

Preserve genetic diversity and secure your food future through open-pollinated seeds

Why Heirloom Seeds Matter

Heirloom varieties are open-pollinated, meaning seeds breed true to type. Unlike hybrid seeds from the shop, you can save and replant them indefinitely — no annual seed purchases needed.

How to Save Seeds

Let your best plants fully mature and go to seed. Dry seeds thoroughly in shade for 1–2 weeks, then store in labelled envelopes in a cool, dark place. Start with easy crops: tomatoes, beans, peas, lettuce, and capsicum.

Best Heirlooms for Brisbane

Tomatoes (Mortgage Lifter, Brandywine), beans (Lazy Housewife, Blue Lake), pumpkins (Queensland Blue), corn (Balinese), capsicum (Bull Nose). Not just seeds, but cuttings and tubers/corms too

Building a Seed Library

Label every seed packet with variety, date, and growing notes. Swap with neighbours and join local seed libraries. Over time you'll develop locally adapted strains that outperform anything from a catalogue.

Every seed you save is a step toward food independence — and a gift to the next generation

Community Networks & Seed Saving

No one is self-sufficient alone — community is your biggest asset

Seed Swaps

Join local seed libraries (Brisbane has several). Save seed from your best-performing open-pollinated varieties every season. Document and record seeds.

Produce Trading

Swap your mango glut for your neighbour's avocados. Informal barter networks build food resilience faster than solo efforts. Doesn’t need to be equitable swaps, just share excess for no expected return, don’t take more then you need

Skill Sharing

Teach fermentation, learn butchering. Your skills are a tradeable asset in tough times, repair clothes and tools and teach the next generation. Also benefits mental health and safety. Helping everyone over time.

Community Gardens

If your block isn't enough, community garden plots expand your growing space and build local food networks.

"Real prepping is system redesign, not hoarding" — Brisbane Sustainability Agency

Your Action Plan

Priority steps for every experience level

Beginners

Start! Grow herbs + salad near the back door • Add 2-3 fruit trees • Get 3 chooks • Learn one ferment (sauerkraut) or water canning recipe and ask for help and knowledge from wider communities

Intermediate

Plant calorie crops (sweet potato, cassava) • Add ducks or quail • Build a solar dehydrator • Start water-bath canning more and pressure canning, learn sourdoughs and ferments • grow peanuts and squeeze oils • Grow your skills and start perfecting some

Advanced

Full food forest layering • Integrate guinea pigs • Master salt-curing & smoking • Build community trading network • Aim for 95%+ self-sufficiency • start teaching and mentoring beginner and intermediate gardeners • work on perfecting skills

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.

Questions & Discussion

See Tilly’s Garden on socials and YouTube for more

Remember: every suburban block is a potential food forest
You don't need acreage — you need a plan

Thank you!