

Gardens for Haiti

Building vegetable production systems with two schools and an orphanage

Melanie Binggeli, Master Student Agricultural Sciences ETHZ



HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS

Educating young children in Haiti how to build a garden with climbing summer vegetables was the main goal of this project. Together with two schools and an orphanage, low-tech low-cost vertical garden systems were built. Construction material was taken mostly from already present materials, such as bamboo and wood from abandoned constructions.

Seeds of cucumbers, beans, peas, peppers and tomatoes were raised and later transplanted into the garden system with the children.



THE SYSTEM

The initial garden system was built and applied in developing countries by Stephan Müller, an organic farmer working in Zurich, Switzerland. The student adapted and integrated his concept in Haiti.

The system aims at growing climbing summer vegetables according to the state-of-the-art in organic agriculture. It educates stakeholders in how to grow vegetables and how to improve the food security of poor citizens living in cities with little space.



EDUCATION MATERIAL

First, a seminar to educate the teachers in the new school program was prepared and already held at the first school.

Second, lectures on plants, organic gardening and composting were prepared and held with nine classes up to now.

Third, further lectures were developed to teach the children about Haiti's environmental problems and how to tackle them. Examples are Haiti's trash disposal system (throwing trash into the streets and burning it there) with how to creatively recycle trash, or deforestation with lectures on how to raise trees. Avocado trees are already raised with seven classes.

