

Week 5 Recap  
Shani Abromowitz  
SOS: E4E Edible Landscaping  
Winter

Week 5 in review

I started week 5 by talking to Brandon Best of the Best Family Farm. Brandon and I chit chatted for an hour. It's always great when he calls, he's got a lot to say. This time he told me to get a contractor's license to work on my client's properties. He said a contractor's licence is necessary for any kind of construction that happens on anybody else's property. This should happen through L&I. Then he offered a deal; he'll let me use some of his greenhouse space and machinery if I exchange labor one day a week. I think I can get down with that, it's a very enriching arrangement. The only thing is...I'm not sure it'll be necessary, as I'll explain later. He also talked about pricing customers differently based on morals and offered two of his lawyers should I ever get shirked around. I'm going to take a field trip his way next Friday. He's really cool. Let this also be a lesson in networking.

I worked on the consumer demographics Monday using ReferenceUSA. ReferenceUSA is very finicky and will give you mixed sets of data. However it's the only free platform I know of that will give you this kind of data, so take what you can get I suppose. I searched the 98506 area using the demographics of income, gender, age, home value, home age, ethnicity, language spoken, marriage status, child status, and religion. In short, without giving too much information away, there is a very large market around me. Most of the homeowners are divorced females in the older years with more than \$50k income/year.

However where can I find this market? I learned in E4E that the whole point of marketing is to get my business in front of my clients' faces. Where is this market? I've done multiple surveys this week and in weeks prior, the information of which can be found [here](#) and [here](#). In short the surveys show that people between 18-24, and 25-34, with no land and low income are not my market because they can't nor won't pay me for my services. So I need to find the older

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people with surplus income and land- that's why I'm going to survey the East Olympia Food Co-Op. I've seen the people who frequent those shops and they're right up my alley.

Going back to ReferenceUSA, I used the site to search my competitors. Long story short, it's a daunting list. I'm competing with large landscaping businesses fully equipped with electricians, plumbers, construction workers, large tractor drivers- how am I to compete? My E4E class suggested that I play the referral game and just stick to what know. If I partner with the right people than they can refer clients to me and likewise. More information on what I found can be read [here](#).

I looked into phytoaccumulators. I've found lots of tables on them: which plants they are and what they accumulate where. Very useful resources that I'll be looking deeper into. [Dr. Duke's Phytochemical and Ethnobotanical Database](#) is a search engine in phytoaccumulators. [This blog](#) offers a similar list. However [Permaculture.org](#) brings up the question of whether or not dynamic accumulators are actually a thing. Dynamic accumulators are different from phytoaccumulators because they supposedly able to mine nutrients and return the nutrient to the soil after leaf shed/decomposition. Now this is accurate to a degree, but the question is: are those nutrients available to the plants in this stage of the process, or do they need to be re-translocated and remineralized? It's a subtle nuance, but a legitimate concern. It's the difference between cider and hard cider- time is everything.

I've been working on the plant cards in my "free time". It's a slowly but surely deal. I met with my study buddy on Tuesday, this business plan is also a slowly but surely deal. I've been reading two books on Edible Landscaping and have been really enjoying thinking about the aesthetic aspect. The books say that the goal is to lead the eye with either implied or obvious lines. They go into brief discussions on the tools of the trade and the history of landscaping, starting with the egyptians who were the first to plan plantings for utility and aesthetics. I'll talk

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more about these books next week. I've also been reading a handful of upper division articles, but I won't be talking about them this week.

Finally, I think I've got a farm manager gig on the Biscay Rd property I talked about [here](#). I've been deep in conversations with Ann and Zahid, who are big time movers in Thurston county. They own the property, they're trying to live on property, and they have rooms available for myself and those I care to bring with me. This has developed my thinking for next quarter - I'm going to work on the farm part time for 8 credits and a rent deduction. I'll do my edible landscaping business part time for 8 credits to produce expendable cash. This will be an ILC, which the G.I Bill will pay for. I'll also be working at the Organic Farm for income. Ann and Zahid have agreed to a 60/40 profit sharing system, and they're willing to pay for the inputs. There's a very talented grant writer who might be living on property. We'll see where this leads, but I'm free to move in April 1st. This is big news, and why networking is so important. But what am I to say to Brandon Best who has offered his greenhouse space for a labor exchange? Maybe I can just swing by as time allows and when he needs it in exchange for machine use. We'll see.

That's my week. This quarter has proven to be eventful and far from my control. However, I feel I'm learning a deeper lesson: Stick to it. No- truly stick to it. People *will* notice. They will talk. The right people will hear. It's only a matter of time. And it's all mental. Think it and it will happen. Think hard- very hard.

This is gonna be a good year. Until next time~

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