

Shani Abromowitz
SOS - E4E Edible Landscaping
First Potential Client
Winter 2016

So last night at the E4E class I was approached by a fellow student who is working with a new client now who is interested in edible landscaping. This student wanted to know if I was interested in the project- I said yes, so today, I went to said client's house to see what we were working with. The client wasn't there, so I didn't get paid. It looks like the client is interested in a \$1500 project, that budget pays just for our hourly labor. With material, it'd be safe to hitch the price up to \$2000. If I had it my way, i would have met the client face-to-face to discuss project goals, visions, budget, get the contract signed, and taken samples. Being that this is my first client (unofficially), I think it's safe to just throw ideas out and see if she bites.

The property is kind of empty. There's a few rhododendrons, a pine tree, some oregon grapes, and a giant hole where a tree use to be but now sits a puddle. The soil is a clay heavy technosoil- poor drainage, acidic- my first worry is mobilized lead and arsenic. I'm going to recommend a soil analysis. There is organic matter in the form of roots, but no channels to suggest worm activity- so, anaerobic, and compacted. The client wants a rain garden. She wants something she doesn't have to manage, that manages itself, doesn't need to be weeded often. Don't we all, that'd just be the bees' knees. Alas, there are options: native plants, hardy to our acidic and cold(ish) environment. Of course my first consideration is climate change, so I need native plants that can also tolerate oregon like weather. She wants a deer screen, so I'm thinking an oregon grape living fence. The rain garden water path will start at the gutter spout and end at a flowering moisture tolerant herb and pollinator patch. The path with be lined with pebbles sitting on top of the clay, with a 1':3' rise over run decline, with succulents along the water path. The surrounding plants lining the perimeter of the water stream will most likely be flowers, or plants with a deep tap root. I'll also be recommending some hugelkultur (buried wood) where the water is puddling, to jump-start the soil rejuvenation process. I'm suggesting nettle because it's edible and will deter deer.

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Where the water really pond up, I'm going to suggest a dwarf fruit tree, or maybe a dwarf nut tree if they're available. As a filler I'm thinking evergreen huckleberry, red huckleberry, and salal because they're low maintenance, long lived, edible, and attractive to native insects, which might help with potential pests.

We'll see what the client wants. She sounds like she wants to install it all herself, and she most likely can, if the rest of her yard is suggestive. If she wants to follow through with our ideas, I'll draw up a contract and payment plan based on my rough draft contract, and will get started on everything. This is really exciting.