

Roots and Leaves: Mobilising Community Gardens
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Keywords: community, gardening, urban-horticulture,

Community gardens are nothing new. The idea of growing food with other people evokes a horticultural imaginary – getting back to nature, the wholesome simplicity of agrarian society and seasonal living. In the urban sprawl of Melbourne a number of these gardens exist, with many more beginning to take shape.

Helping with this development is community gardening organisation *3000acres*, a non-profit seeking to 'connect people to land, resources and each other so that more people can grow more food in more places' (<http://www.3000acres.org/about>). Using an online platform, geo-locative technologies, and 1000 litre Intermediate Bulk Containers, *3000acres* gardens are often temporary and relocatable, a condition of working with developers.

3000acres, then, augments a traditionally static practice with techniques of contemporary mobility. They identify a number of surpluses (space, time, materials) and mobilise various forms of knowledge (spatial, economic, political, horticultural) in order to exploit these surpluses. The desire to form and engage communities and grow food in available spaces, however, also allows, developers to green-wash their practice, councils to outsource their community and health engagement, and property owners to maintain or even improve the value of their property. Because of these factors, the gardens are precarious: they are required to produce nutritionally, socially and aesthetically – for growers, communities, developers and *3000acres*.

The purpose of this inquiry is to trace the developments of a number of these gardens. What type of community do these gardens assemble? What knowledge is produced, transferred? What compromises are needed to connect with the land and the seasons in an urban environment? More than fruit and vegetables; what is produced and mobilised within these communities?

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Respondent >

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