

Creating a Mini Food Forest



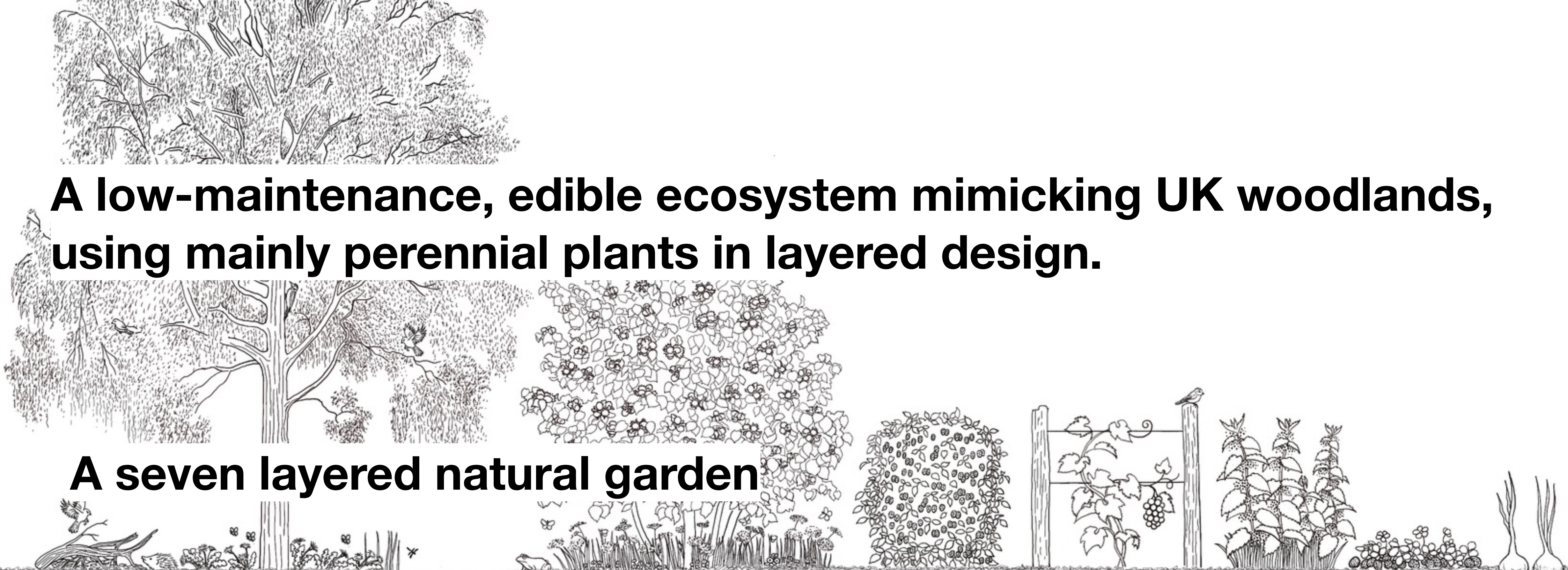
What is a Food Forest?

Think of a food forest as a multi-layered garden, with seven distinct layers

One that mimics nature



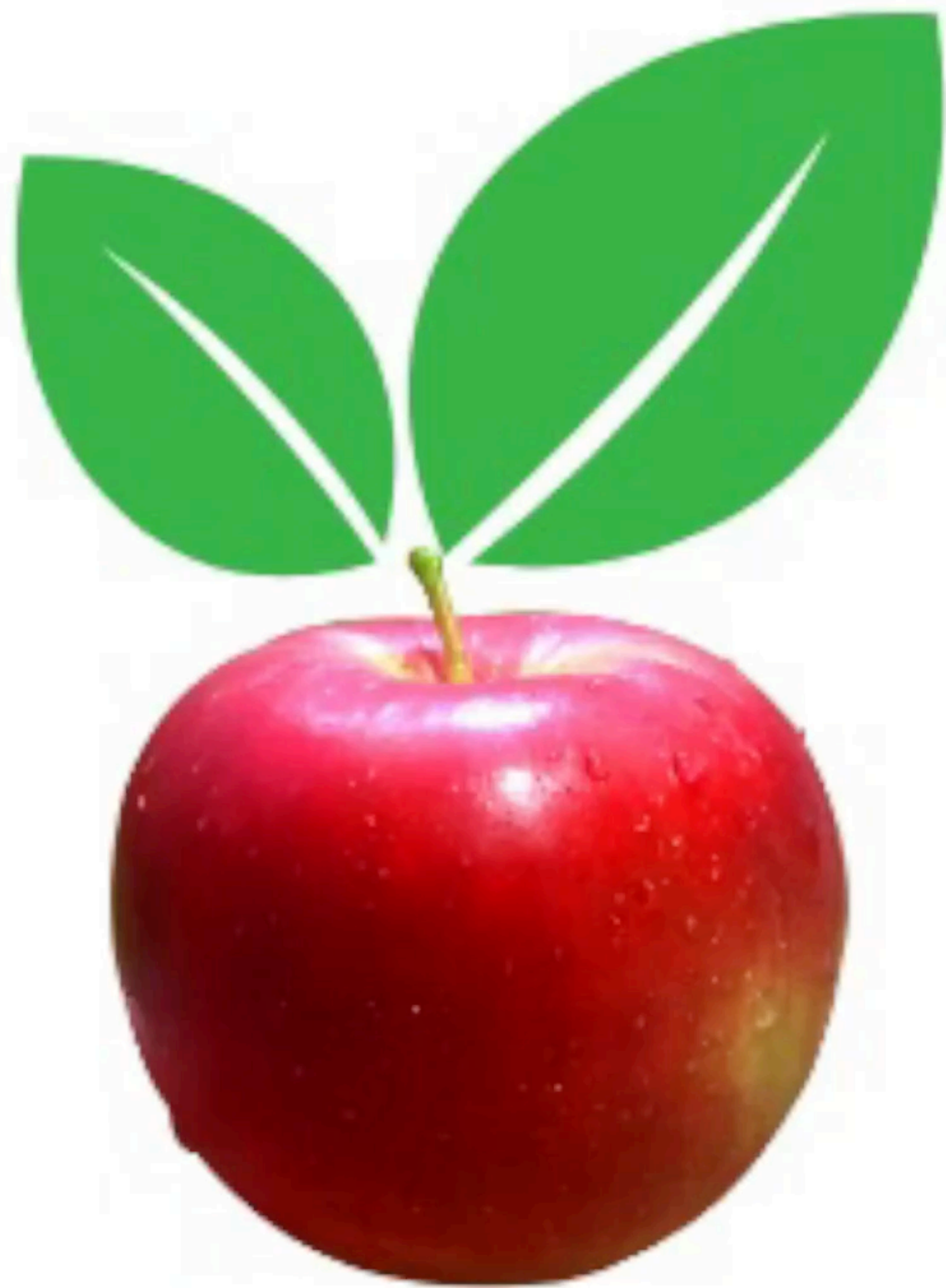
What is a Food Forest?



A low-maintenance, edible ecosystem mimicking UK woodlands, using mainly perennial plants in layered design.

A seven layered natural garden





Sidmouth Community Food Forest

Sidmouth Community Food Forest

This food forest is designed for food production, people and wildlife. Food forests are natural, sustainable, diverse systems that mimic the structure and function of natural forests. Food forests normally consist of the seven layers seen here.

Beware! Although food is produced here this is also a wild area with wild plants that are not safe to eat. Don't eat anything unless you know it is safe to do so.

Take Care. Welcome to our Food Forest!

This beautiful space is full of delicious and interesting plants, but please be aware of a few things before you explore:

Not all plants are edible. Some can be poisonous or cause allergic reactions. If you're unsure, please don't eat it! Thorns and prickles abound! Many plants have natural defenses. Watch your step and be careful when reaching for fruits or flowers. **Children must be supervised at all times. Little hands love to explore, but it's important to keep them safe. Please make sure children are aware of the dangers and stay within sight.**

Thank you for your cooperation! Enjoy the wonders of the food forest.

Things To Do in the Food Forest

For Children

Sensory Exploration Walk: Encourage children to use their senses – touch different textures, smell the flowers, listen to the birds.

Make a den in the willow structures.

Story Time in the Forest: Find a cozy spot under a tree and read stories about nature, forests, or garden adventures.

Mini Beast Hunt: Look under logs and stones for insects, worms, and other creepy crawlies. Use a magnifying glass for a closer look!

Count the birds and animals in the Seven Layers illustration. Which ones can you see when you explore the food forest?

For Adults

Volunteer Day: Help maintain the food forest by joining a volunteer day, assisting with tasks like weeding, mulching, or planting.

Birdwatching: Bring binoculars and a bird identification guide to observe the diverse birdlife that inhabits the food forest.

For Both:

Picnic in the Forest: Pack a lunch and enjoy a relaxing picnic surrounded by the sights and sounds of nature.

Nature Walk and Talk: Join a guided walk to learn about the history of the food forest, the plants and animals that live there, and the principles of food forest design.

The Seven Layers in a Food Forest

Think of a food forest as a multi-layered garden, with seven distinct layers:

- 1) **Tall Tree (Canopy) Layer** - Trees: Birch, apple, pear, plum, damson, cherry, walnut etc.
- 2) **Low Tree** - Low trees: Hazel, elderberry, mulberry etc.
- 3) **Shrub Layer** - Shrubs: Currants, gooseberry, raspberry, blackberry, loganberry, etc.
- 4) **Vine Layer** - Vines: Clematis, hops, grapevine, kiwi, grape, etc.
- 5) **Herbaceous Layer** - Herbaceous: Rhubarb, nettles, cardoons, buckwheat, mint, parsley, chives, etc.
- 6) **Ground Cover Layer** - Groundcovers: Strawberries, trailing thyme, ivy, garlic chives
- 7) **Root Layer** - Root vegetables: Potatoes, onions, garlic, walking onions

By mimicking nature's intricate web of interactions, food forests can create a resilient and productive system that requires minimal input while providing a bounty of fresh, healthy food.



Discover More

We run regular volunteer sessions and training days. Details are available via the Facebook and website links below.

Food Forest
Management Plan



Facebook



SVBG



Contact Details

We can be contacted via our Facebook group - Sidmouth Community Food Forest or SidValleyBiodiversity.org



SIDMOUTH
TOWN COUNCIL



SEVEN FOREST LAYERS



Sidmouth
Community
Food Forest

How Big Are Food Forests?

Plant guilds

Singular, linear and widespread



Homework

Design your ideal single tree food forest





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Costanea sativa - M3.

Common Name	Sweet Chestnut, European chestnut
Family	Fagaceae
USDA Hardiness	9-7
Known Hazards	None known
Habitats	Woods in mountainous areas
Range	S. Europe, Iran, naturalized in Sicily
Edibility Rating	
Medicinal Rating	
Care	

Summary



Physical Characteristics

Costanea sativa is a deciduous tree growing to 30 m (98ft) by 15 in (40ft) at a medium rate. It is hardy to zone 9 and is not frost tender. It is in flower in July, and the seeds ripen in October. The flowers are monoecious (individual flowers are either male or female, but both sexes can be found on the same plant) and are pollinated by Bees. It is noted for attracting wildlife. Suits for light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils.

8000+ Plant Pages

Hardiness zones, Care, Hazards, Physical Characteristics, Synonyms, Habitats, Edible Uses, Medicinal Uses, Other Uses, Cultivation Details, Propagation and more...





Database Plant Search Page:

Edible, Medicinal and other uses of over 8,000 plants

<https://pfaf.org/user/plantsearch.aspx>

Potential single tree guild members

**Mashua, nettles, broad beans or field beans,
coriander, spinach, hairy bittercress, fat hen,
lemon grass, dandelions, gourds, courgettes,
primroses, salad burnett, perennial kale,
walking onions, hostas etc.**



BiteSizedGardening.co.uk

Next Session December 14th 2-4pm

Seven Food Forest Layers

Tall Tree (Canopy) Layer - Trees: Birch, apple, pear, plum, damson, cherry, walnut etc.

Low Tree - Low trees: Hazel, elderberry, mulberry etc.

Shrub Layer - Shrubs: Currants, gooseberry, raspberry, blackberry, loganberry, etc.

Vine Layer - Hops, grapevine, kiwi, grape, etc.

Herbaceous Layer - Rhubarb, nettles, cardoons, buckwheat, mint, parsley, chives, etc.

Ground Cover Layer - Strawberries, trailing thyme, garlic chives

Root Layer - Root vegetables: Potatoes, onions, garlic, walking onions

By mimicking nature's intricate web of interactions, food forests can create a resilient and productive system that requires minimal input while providing a bounty of fresh, healthy food.