

# Experiencing Nature at Good Roots Farm

## 善根農場的大自然體驗

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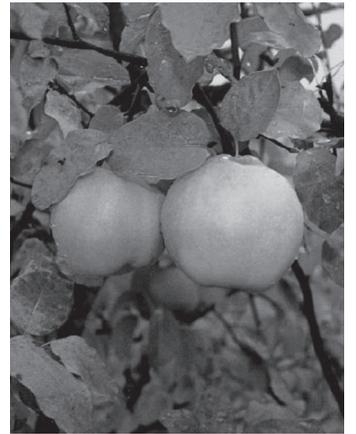
曾國豐、曾宇梵 中譯

“Get your carving tools out!” The Junior High class from the Girl’s Division visited the community farm of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas before Halloween. The farm manager Jin Rou Shr invited the class to select a pumpkin in the spirit of Halloween, “The farm has hundreds of jolly and spooky pumpkins to decorate your front porch or for a Halloween carving contest. There are Little Bear pumpkins and Renee’s spooky carving pumpkins waiting for you.” And it was that kids from all ages, even high schoolers, picked pumpkins straight from the vines with great joy. This is their story.

The students had just finished a book, *Seedfolks*, and a large part of it was centered upon a community garden. Inspired greatly by the book’s depiction of the success of the community garden, the girls felt that to be able to volunteer in a community farm would be enlightening and fun. To experience first-hand how it

「把雕刻工具拿出來！」萬聖節前，培德女校初中部來到聖城的有機農場，管理人近柔師邀請學生們挑個南瓜：「這裡有上百個歡樂又詭譎的南瓜！可以用來裝飾家裡的門廊，或是拿去參加萬聖節雕刻比賽。小熊南瓜和蕾妮的怪異南瓜都在等著你喔！」於是，一群大大小小的孩子們開心地將南瓜從藤蔓上摘下來。以下就是他們的經歷。

這學期學生們剛讀完一本書《Seedfolks》（撒種人），書的內容大部分圍繞著一座社區菜園。受到書裡描繪的那座成功社區菜園的鼓舞，學生們覺得在農場擔任義工一定可以獲得靈感和樂趣。為了親身體驗，他們決定走一趟



felt to be part of a community garden, they decided to visit Good Roots Farm, the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas' community farm.

The arrangements were made, and one morning the class, clad in comfortable clothes and sturdy shoes, made the short walk to the nearby vegetable farm. When they arrived, they were separated into two groups: one of which would pick and sort pumpkins and squash, pull vines, and load the freshly picked squash into an orange farm cart, and another group, which would shovel and rake the nutrient-packed soil, as well as spread wood chips between rows of vegetables.

Over the course of the class period, the class alternated between tilling the rich soil and pumpkin picking. Some students also cut grass with a hula hoe, a special type of hoe, to make a border of herbs and other plants around the garden to attract pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, as well as to deter insects that would be detrimental to the vegetables.

Time flew, and soon it was time to return back to the traditional academic environment of the classroom. When reflecting back upon the experience, Sara, a member of the Junior High, noted, "I really enjoyed the hard work and peacefulness in nature." This opinion was seconded and echoed by many others. As Amy N. said, "It was a natural hard work experience of my life." Naomi added, "Although I was really tired, I still really enjoyed dedicating my hard work to nature."

Despite everyone's exhaustion, we agreed that our visit was definitely worthwhile and eye-opening. Finally, Thuy, Hailey, and Rachel summed everyone's general opinion up nicely, speaking of the "exciting", "fun", and "wonderful experience" they had just had. Each member of the class had an aspect of the trip which they felt was the most interesting, inspiring, and fun. While describing her personal highlight of the trip, An exclaimed, "We (even) got to catch a frog!"

We, of today's modern world, whether by habit or by necessity, tend to fill each and every moment of our lives with chores, activities, and errands, rarely turning around to look within at our innate natures and personalities. However, in the garden, we are given the opportunity to give ourselves some slack, time-wise as well as mental-wise. Gardening gives us the chance to enjoy and experience a connection with nature. It so provides us with valuable space and time within, where we can reflect upon ourselves, and an escape from the fast-paced outside world. ❀

萬佛聖城的社區農場「善根農場」。

早晨時分，同學們準備就緒，穿著舒適的衣服和堅固的鞋子來到了農場。他們被分成兩組：一組負責採收南瓜，包括分類橘皮南瓜（pumpkin）和綠皮南瓜（squash）、拉藤，並將新鮮的南瓜裝載到橘色的農用車。另一組負責鬆土，包括鏟開和耙平營養土，並在菜壟間撒下碎木片。

兩組同學互相交換體驗耕犁土壤和採摘南瓜，有些同學還幫忙用一種形狀特殊的「呼拉鋤」除草，並在菜園四周築一道花草牆，吸引蜜蜂和蝴蝶來傳播花粉，同時遏制對蔬菜不利的昆蟲。

時間飛逝，大家很快又回到了課堂的傳統學習環境。回顧這段經歷時，初中學生莎拉說：「真的很享受辛勤勞務和大自然的寧靜。」莎拉的想法獲得許多同學的認同和迴響。就像艾米·恩說的：「這是我有生以來第一次從事自然勞務。」納奧米補充說：「雖然很累，但我還是很開心奉獻自己的勞力給大自然。」

儘管筋疲力盡，大家卻一致認為這次造訪絕對值得，並且大開眼界。最後惠、海莉和芮秋「精彩」、「好玩」和「美好體驗」的感想，道出大家的心聲，同時也是精彩的總結。這次行程，每個人都獲得自己認為最好玩有趣，又最富啟發的經驗。「我們竟然可以抓到青蛙！」這是安描述這一堂自然體驗時發出的驚嘆。

身在今日的現代社會，無論是習慣使然或基於需要，都傾向用各種瑣事、活動和差事來填補生活的每一刻，很少轉向觀察我們內在的本性與個性。然而，在菜園裡我們被賦予時間和精神方面的緩衝，使我們有機會享受和體驗與大自然的聯繫。它為我們提供了寶貴的空間和時間，讓我們得以反思自己，從步調緊湊的感官世界中跳脫而出。❀

## 食存五觀 (續) Five Contemplations When Eating (continued)

4. 正事良藥。為療形枯。這個所吃的東西啊，這真正是一種良藥，為了治自己這個身體枯槁這個病，所以才要吃飯，才要吃東西。

5. 為成道故，方受此食。因為想要成就道業，所以才受這種的飲食。❀

4. **Properly taken, the food is like medicine, to keep the body from wasting away.** If you don't eat, your body grows weak. Therefore, it is only to prevent weakness that you receive the food.

5. **This food is accepted only in order to accomplish the Way.** Think to yourself, "I only take this food in order to cultivate and accomplish the karma of the Way." ❀