

Crops for Cornwall Community Grains Concept

We are interested in the possibility of growing novel grains (cereals and pulses) on a small scale. Ideally identifying local heritage crops and varieties adapted to the climate (such as orange devon wheat and naked oats) and experimenting with new crops potentially appropriate such as lentils, tiger nuts and peas. .

Part of the objective is to explore crops historically grown in Cornwall and those that may have arrived on our shores with the maritime trade.. exploring local social history, culture and traditions around them.

This is an opportunity to engage people with how cereals and grains are produced and processed. Exploring the current and potential role of diversity on diets and agroecoystems. Trying new crops in the Cornish climate and exploring lost crops from the area and their stories. Looking for ways of involving the community in the process of experimentation!

We can invite people to get involved with the stages of production and processing – from sowing seed, weeding / harvest / threshing / winnowing and then milling and possibly baking. We could look to host days to do these activities and celebrate together.

We propose to link tasks over the growing season with regular volunteering days and activities, including tasks on the jobs list.

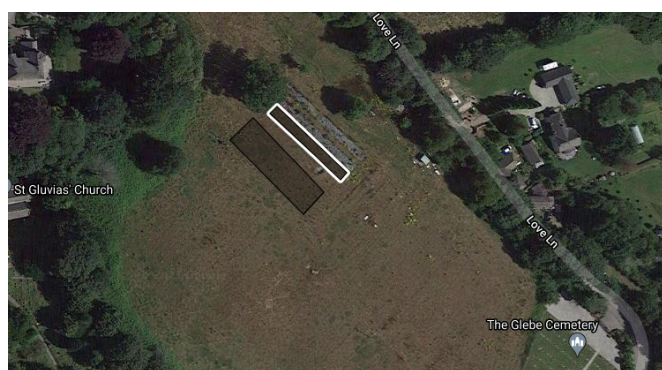
This could also link with local artists to develop creative activities – exploring the stories of the crops, drawing / painting and cyanotype / photography to capture their growth patterns and stages. If we have funding / capacity we could look at cooking / workshops for processing into further products.. such as bread / beer, maybe even tempeh if my trials work and we can get access to a food grade kitchen..!

We suggest we focus this year on testing things out for possibly scaling up next year with more community workshops and cooking?

If successful produce could feed into a community harvest feast with produce from rest of the field in September next year?

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Currently involved: Katie and Duncan (Emma / Harriet have also expressed an interest) - will make a thread on Loomio and add people in



Two potential plots on community beds. Could also look at integrating with commercial veg rotation if we are confident we will be able to keep it weeded!

Area needed: approx.. 0.05ha

We would grow small plots / strips – potentially looking at intercropping / strip cropping and companion cropping. Undersowing with a living mulch may also help with suppressing weeds.

Needs:

- Area to be ploughed now or in spring – ideally with a good seedbed but we can try to do it by hand - hard to tell at the moment how hard that would be as it is so wet.
- Ideally to borrow a hand held seeder
- Coordination Time / Volunteer support
- Ideally some funding and collaborators for workshops – could have one in DiverIMPACT if before May
- Scything party – Daisy can hopefully point us in the right direction
- Kitchen time / people to help??
- Seed cost – can hopefully be partially funded by DiverIMPACT

Challenges / Practicalities:

- Harvest – weeds may make scything difficult
- For the cereals there are lots of steps to consider in harvest and post harvest which are challenging without a combine! Stooking, winnowing, Threshing etc - but part of the fun / learning is finding innovative ways to do this together!! Could make and borrow some of the equipment
- Will be mainly time for coordination if we want to do the activities..
- Weed management - esp if in a commercial bed. Can weed it on volunteer days and look at a living mulch too.
- Crop failure- trying lots of things we expect some things to fail.. so need to keep on top of weeds and think about how to fill gaps

Potential crops:

- Yellow peas
- Wakelyns population YQ wheat
- Haricot beans
- Olive green lentils
- Fava beans
- Blue peas
- Badger peas
- Naked Oats
- Amaranth
- Quinoa
- Tiger nuts

- Local Heritage wheat e.g orange devon,
- Emmer
- Millet
- Buckwheat
- Barley (dredge corn – barley and oats grown together)
- Chickpeas
- Linseed
- Rye

(We will shortlist this!)

Access to seed:

Katie has lentils / wakelyns population / blue peas / millers choice heritage wheat
 Hodmedod
 Exeter Uni
 Plotty Grow
 Seed Banks
 Duncan has some quinoa and amaranth

Next steps

- Make Loomio thread
- Establish Grains group
- Identify area
- Green manure
- Cropping plan - Identify crops and area (how to establish / seed rates / responsible person) put in Gantt chart?
- Harvest and processing plan – with thoughts on dates for potential volunteer days
- Get hold of seed
- Calculate potential staffing requirements for coordination / workshops / materials and seed for Budget / funding proposals

Other ideas... while we are here ;)

- **Squash coop** - plant out a full bed with squash - they fill space and keep abs would are for a great harvest festival! A d taste so good! Also could try some three sisters.. could be in the bed in extension of community plots
- **Novel / exotic crops in polytunnel** pushing the boundaries of production in Cornwall :) could do in collaboration with ORC / plotty grow and duchy college - solanaceae (physalis/ tomatillo), melons, ginger, tubers such as oca, ,cucamelon <https://www.agricology.co.uk/resources/novel-vegetables-observations-growing-range-tropical-crops>
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