

What is THE GARDEN ESTATE?

THE GARDEN ESTATE is our dream: a piece of land managed as natural as possible. Humans, animals and plants living together in harmony and to their benefit. THE GARDEN ESTATE shall be an oasis for all of us. With healthy soil, healthy food, healthy working conditions.

THE GARDEN ESTATE is a social eco farming project in Sri Lanka. Originally a brownfield site within about three years we have planted hundreds of plants (especially fruit trees and coconut palms), created a large lake, built a house from clay, bamboo and timber as well as established an independent energy supply with a small wind turbine and solar panels. We refrain from using any artificial fertilizers and pesticides on THE GARDEN ESTATE. The name of the project shall be our program. We are working to create a large and diverse garden. The project gives people work and feeds them.

THE GARDEN ESTATE is adjacent to the largest national park in Sri Lanka – the Wilpattu Forest Reserve. Above all having a National Park next door for us means tranquility and the view towards a huge forest. With the ecological management of THE GARDEN ESTATE, we do our part that less agricultural chemicals get into the National Park.

Who is THE GARDEN ESTATE?

THE GARDEN ESTATE was founded by Suresh and Anne Dittrich. Suresh grew up in Sri Lanka, but is living in Europe since many years. Anne comes from Germany and has spent many months in Sri Lanka. The island is our second home. THE GARDEN ESTATE is merely funded through our salaries in Germany so far. We are surrounded by friends and family around the world, who follow our vision, share the same values as well as support and encourage us with ideas, practical help and advice.

We have therefore found people on site, who work with us to turn THE GARDEN ESTATE into a green oasis. First of all Nilantha, Suresh's cousin works with us. He lives with his family under simple conditions in the newly built house on our land.

Why are we doing THE GARDEN ESTATE?

Within about 30 years - since the Sri Lankan government has approved the import of seeds and fertilizers - almost the entire knowledge of local farmers about organic farming methods got lost. We are disturbed about how mainly small farmers have become dependent on agrochemicals.

Our goals with THE GARDEN ESTATE are:

- Create jobs to secure several families' income
- Create jobs in a healthy working environment
- spread the knowledge of organic farming methods (again)
- set an example with THE GARDEN ESTATE: "Look, it works. We can feed ourselves without agrochemicals and even make money."
- create a place of equality and integration in a country with a long civil war history: We welcome people of all ethnics, religions and genders!

Why a donation campaign for cows?

Rathie is already there! Our first cow lives at THE GARDEN ESTATE since 2013, and had her first calf Wasana in January. The natural land with its juicy grass is a paradise for Rathie and Wasana. But our single mum Rathie is lonely and only has a temporary shelter. Therefore we want to bring in some cow friends and build a proper barn.

For our project, cows are very valuable and provide a good basis in the long run:

- regular milk sales enable us to feed at least two families (given 5 dairy cows).
- These families can maintain the plants, grow vegetables, fruits and spices. Generating income from these products will enable us to pay more workers and more families can profit from THE GARDEN ESTATE
- Cows also help us to keep the lush sprouting grass short, which we would otherwise have to mow by hand or consume fossil fuel for a lawn mower.
- Finally, we can collect dung in the barn: cow dung is great fertilizer! At the moment we have to buy it, and we want to save these costs.

What we want to do now:

- buy three more cows
- build a barn
- transport the three animals from Negombo to THE GARDEN ESTATE
- buy milking equipment (milking machine with renewable energy supply, buckets, cans)

For this next step on our way to the oasis we need your help!

Be part of this great idea!

Become a part of THE GARDEN ESTATE!