
Toronto's Community Orchard Project: Ben Nobleman Park



UPDATE June 4, 2009

First 9 trees are in the ground at Ben Nobleman Park, site of TO's first community orchard: pears, plums, and cherries. Hooray!

I just learned about wonderful proposal to plant a community orchard not far from the Eglinton West Subway station in *Ben Nobleman* park.

This initiative is spearheaded by the group [Growing For Green](#) and the group [Not Far From the Tree](#), which collects and distributes fruit from city trees. *Growing for Green* is an eco-gardening group based in Toronto's west end founded by filmmaker, journalist and gardener Susan Poizner (www.susanpoizner.com) together with painter and gardener Sherry Firing.

From the Growing for Green website:

Our goal is to plant 40 fruit trees including apples, pears, cherries and plums, in the underused Ben Nobleman Park across from Eglinton West

subway station.

Community orchards have existed in the United Kingdom for over 20 years and in Boston and Philadelphia for over a decade. Learn more about the orchard proposal [here](#).

Not Far From the Tree picked 3,003 pounds of residential fruit in 2008. From their website:

The core of our programming is our residential fruit-picking program, where we pick fruit from trees that would otherwise go to waste. We help fruit tree owners make use of the abundance of fruit that their trees offer by dispatching teams of volunteers to harvest it for them. One third goes to the fruit tree owners, another third goes to the volunteers for their labour, and the final third is distributed (by bicycle or cart) to community organizations in the neighbourhood who can make good use of the fresh fruit.

Visit the [Not Far From the Tree website here](#).

I really hope this orchard plan becomes a reality. It's looking good, as the organizers have help from [Carrot Cache](#), Toronto [Parks Forestry and Recreation](#), and City Councillor [Joe Mihevc](#). The group has created a [community orchard website](#), as well, and you can check it out [here](#).

