



ABOUT KAY BAXTER



Kay Baxter director and co founder of Koanga Institute (www.koanga.org.nz), has been a permaculture designer and teacher, a grower and collector of heritage organic seeds, an ardent fan of biological agriculture, and a presenter for many years. She is also passionate about nutrition.

Kay is well known for her role as a founder and managing director of the Koanga Institute which has been operating in various forms for the last 30 years and holds New Zealand's largest collection of heritage organic seeds and fruit trees. Since 1920 the world has lost around 90% of our vegetable seeds, and around 85% of our fruit varieties. Kay has been the driving force behind saving 800+ seed lines and 400+ fruit tree and berry varieties, through the Koanga Institute. She has an encyclopaedic memory of the history of each seed; including how and where they arrived in New Zealand and the names of the people who entrusted them to her. Though on the cutting edge of permaculture and soil science, in some ways Kay is a gardening historian, recapturing past knowledge to ensure the future health of people and plants.

Kay is most happy in the garden and orchard, or in the kitchen. Out of this passion has grown a wide knowledge and experience with growing and preparing healthy food.

Kay has featured on programmes such as Country Calendar, Seven Sharp and had many interviews with Radio NZ, Radio Live and NZ Herald. She has been a prolific writer for several national magazines, including *Soil and Health*, *Growing Today* and the *NZ Gardener*. She has written and published several books and garden resources including:

- Koanga Gardening Guide – a complete guide to gardening organically and sustainably
- Whats Happening – How to manage your Permaculture Home Garden/Orchard Month by Month
- Design Your Own Orchard - Bringing Permaculture Design to the Ground in Aotearoa
- Co-Author of Body and Soul, a recipe book for home gardeners
- Change of Heart cookbook - The Ecology of Nourishing Food which has a strong emphasis on applying the work of the Weston A Price Foundation to NZ food and our health
- Booklets on growing nutrient dense food, saving seeds, urban gardens and starting a food garden
- She has recently released a garden planner containing her “life’s work” which is a stunning resource for anyone wanting a productive home garden.

In the past Kay has worked in the East Cape developing community gardens and programs for Te Runanga o te Whanau a Apanui at Whitianga near the mouth of the Motu river.

At present Kay is part of a team planning the creation of a Community Land Trust in Wairoa, Hawkes Bay, which will be their new permanent home for the work they are doing.

In the last five years Kay has explored the interconnected ecology of our seeds, soils, plants, animals, food and human health. This has been an amazing journey for her, and she has found the science to support her intuitive knowledge of the importance of heritage organic seeds and nutritious food for our health. Much of this science is relatively new and not widely understood, while some is older and largely ignored by our commercial culture.

Kay is an inspiring speaker and can share her journey with you in ways which are both entertaining and challenging.

“Kay Baxter is a true eco-hero, I am a huge admirer of the work she has pioneered with the Koanga Institute to save and protect our seeds. Koanga Institute is a really unique trust; there is no other seed bank with organic heritage seeds like this in New Zealand.”

- Malcolm Rands (Ecoman), founder and director of EcoStore.

“Kay is one of the very best gardeners I have ever met and has made the most thorough detail study of heritage fruit trees and food plant seeds having been very active in saving local seed and fruit tree varieties, her knowledge through practical experience, and major achievements that have built a huge wealth of knowledge is way beyond anybody I know.”

- Geoff Lawton, internationally recognised permaculture consultant, designer and teacher from Australia