



50 years with WWOOF

2021



WWOOF's mission:

Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) is a worldwide movement to link visitors (WWOOFers) with organic farmers, promote a cultural and educational exchange, and build a global community conscious of ecological farming and sustainability practices.

FoWO's (Federation of WWOOF Organisations) mission:

To unite, promote, protect and support the WWOOF movement around the world.



wwoof.net

wwoofindependents.org



2021

50 years with WWOOF

For 50 years national WWOOF organisations have been on a mission to educate people through inspiring hands-on exchanges, while supporting local farmers who are feeding their communities and training the next generation.

WWOOF was founded in 1971 in the UK and is one of the world's first educational and cultural exchange programs. The program brings together people from all backgrounds and ways of life who share similar values and philosophies. WWOOFing is a meaningful way to learn practical

farming skills, be part of the agro-ecological movement, and experience the heart of a culture. Today, the WWOOF program is in more than 130 countries around the world - and it continues to grow.

In 2012, the Federation of WWOOF Organisations (FoWO) was created to act as a democratic organisation for national WWOOF groups to work together worldwide. FoWO's mission is to unite, promote, protect and support the WWOOF movement around the world.



WWOOF
FoWO Federation of
WWOOF
Organisations



A global host community



“Just came in from the forest to pick the young ramps. A wonderful spring sun is shining in and highlights all the subtle homegrown around. Cranberry juice that we harvested from the swamps last year, leeks and onions from the garden, plenty of colorful rich eggs, even the kitchen is homemade!”

WWOOF host in Latvia



“We are having our quarantine following with our everyday activity of food gardening, cooking with fire, eating what we grew and what nature brings by herself here in natural environments, sleeping at our mud houses, feeding the chickens, harvesting honey from the bees.

to have chosen to be here and that at this moment we still feel free and in communion with nature.

Hopefully we will keep on sharing after we heal as humanity and hopefully more people will arrive to live together and keep on producing abundance for our own lives!”

We have lots of gratitude to nature,

WWOOF host in Argentina



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WWOOFers for life

“I still feel privileged to be invited into hosts’ homes and lives after all these years and perhaps over a hundred placements ...

I have learned so many different skills; practical and culinary, practised languages and passed on my knowledge, if appropriate, as I interacted and aged over the past years.



I am told, often now, that I am a reliable and responsible house, barn, child and animal sitter ‘extraordinaire’. What more could a WWOOFer want at my time of life?”

I am ‘only’ in my early 70s and hope to WWOOF until I am 80!

Lesley, WWOOFer in UK



“Joe was one of my first WWOOFers - arriving in 1987 fresh off his bike at the age of 18, and met his future partner Becky (a fellow WOOFer) here on my farm a few years later. They now live in Wales and have 3 children. The eldest, Adam, comes back to WWOOF here about once a year, as has his Dad for many years. In

2017 they came back together and renovated the tool shed that Joe had built 30 years ago!

This relationship spans over 36 years of WWOOFing, not quite as long as WWOOF itself has been going but not far off!”

Bridget, WWOOF host in Italy



Joe's tool shed

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WWOOF host grant winners

For 10 years now WWOOF Portugal has been giving a grant to one of the host farms each year.

This program awards grants for special projects that help further the WWOOF movement, enhance the educational experience of visiting WWOOFers on host farms, and promote small-scale organic agriculture.

“Wood, straw and clay, were the main materials used. The idea was to pass on the skills of natural building to the locals and whoever was interested, and to manufacture together a simple building with clay, straw and wood.



In 2015 also the Federation of WWOOF Organisations (FoWO) set up a Host Grant Program to support WWOOF hosts in its member countries.

“We are a family of permaculturists and artists that came to live on a piece of land that was intensively cultivated by monoculture practices thus we found the ecosystem in

The workshop was held on 3 different days with the participation of around 10 people, and at the end the eco house for WWOOFers was ready.”

Eva and Fernando, WWOOF hosts grant winners in Portugal



a very degraded stage. During the years we could regenerate part of the area through different researches in Natural Agriculture and Forest Gardening practices.

The project aims to create an agroforestry system to restore the bio-diversity to a place that has been ecologically degraded in order to demonstrate that any piece of land is able to be regenerated to an abundant stage through sustainable management. This work is combined with voluntary work and courses to teach about forest gardening and agroforestry.”

WWOOF host grant winners in Chile



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My WWOOF story

“I thought what I have experienced in Nepal would be just as all the other trips I had in any other places which, as time goes by, will fade. But I was wrong, right now when I am under big pressure, or I am so tired from a day's work, the peaceful

views of sunset, the unforgettable meals without electricity, the forever dancing of the girls and so many laughing moments will float up and calm me down.”

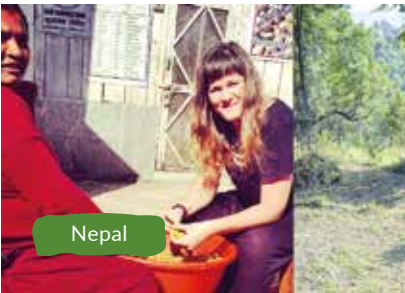
Elva, WWOOFer in Nepal



"I truly love this beautiful country of mountains and bears and had an awesome time over there! WWOOFing was part of my experience in Canada and I find it more than just enriching. It was a way of life, a way to meet new people and to work with them together. I got to know different ways of life and learned a lot from my hosts.

I believe that WWOOFing is a great way to find the natural trust in people today's societies are missing. Through WWOOF I found some lifelong- friendships which make me incredibly happy!"

Rabanus, WWOOFer in Canada



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Growing your own food



“Antiviral breakfast contains black currant berries and cranberries conserved without sugar and electricity with seeds and nuts soaked in their juice; bread with fermented wild herbs, garlic, broccoli shoots and black currant and birch baby leaves grown indoors in a vase; herb tea from fireweed, raspberry and meadowsweet.”

WWOOF host in Finland



Costa Rica



Turkey



France



Belarus



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How WWOOF changed my life

"I grew up on a small farm in central Italy and when I was a teenager we started to host WWOOFers. Amazing people started to arrive at our farm and the sense of intellectual isolation disappeared with the first WWOOFer. When I was 19,I decided to go WWOOFing myself. After registering with WWOOF Canada I received a printed list of host-contacts by post. There were no reviews or pictures back then, just trust and adventure! I travelled in my tent for five incredible months, hitch-hiking from host to host from the Yukon down to Vancouver.

Back home I became more and more involved in WWOOF Italia and started to attend some national and international meetings and

in 2012 I was lucky enough to participate in the foundation of FoWO (Federation of WWOOF Organisations) and shortly after started to manage the WWOOF Independents platform, which enables hosts and WWOOFers to interact in countries where a national organisation is yet to be established.

Since then I have been involved in all national and international aspects of this incredible movement, which has such a profound impact on so many people. I now have my own family and my own farm in the Italian Alps. I hope to become a WWOOF host soon and at some point, a WWOOFer again."

Basil, FoWO Coordinator



"I learned about WWOOF while interning at an organic farm in 2010. This inspired me to visit other WWOOF farms around the world. Waking up to meditate with farmers in Thailand, building an adobe skate park for youth in Cambodia and planting rice by hand in Japan, I've connected in a deep way with people from other parts of the world, and I feel like I've contributed to making the world a better place.

When I returned to the US I wanted to build my own small timber frame cabin on a parcel of windswept prairie and decided I needed help and had a lot to share, so I signed up as a WWOOF-USA host. Two WWOOFers, Mario and Hallie, wanted to learn sustainable living skills, and as soon as they arrived we became friends. We worked together to complete my cabin, prepare meals, harvest local foods,

collect field stones and talk during the long dark hours of the South Dakota winter. It was from Mario that I learned of WWOOF-USA's Ambassador Program. I was thrilled when I was chosen to represent WWOOF-USA. Over the course of six months I visited 68 host farms in Minnesota, eastern South Dakota and Florida.

In 2019, I became WWOOF-USA's new Membership Program Manager. I am now the point of contact for all inquiries we receive through our website. I also manage our host approval program, allowing me to get to know new hosts and offer tips and advice. I love WWOOF, and continue to participate not only as a staff member, but also as a host and a WWOOFer."

Jenna, Membership Program Manager WWOOF-USA

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Animal traction Italy

Sustainable practices



Germany
WWOOFers Maud and Dorian build a wicker bench



Planting fruit trees Haiti



Compost heap Kenya



Leave roofing in Thailand



Cob mortar Cambodia



Ghana
The compost toilet is now ready. With this valuable new building, we ensure the cycle of life. By composting, valuable fertilizer is obtained to show the people in Ghana how to get high quality fertilizer without being dependent on large corporations.



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India

The starting of a new farm

“I love eating, and farming is usually very delicious. And what continues to give me pleasure in farming is the pleasure of eating something that is so sun-sweet, like a tomato that is still warm from the sun. There is nothing quite as nourishing as eating fresh fruit that you have just picked!”

“We just started helping each other out, sharing ideas, sharing seeds; we both love to share information! Nothing is a secret. Nothing is proprietary. If I have something that works well, I want you to know about it.”

Jonathan (member of a WWOOF host family in Canada) and Adrienne running an organic farm together in India



“After graduating I signed up for WWOOF, but it was winter ... so I ended up with the only host in North Italy that would take me in. From this unexpected beginning, a passion was born; I discovered that I liked spending time with animals, the work, the rhythm of this new life. For someone who fears the monotony of work, it was refreshing to taste every season and all of the different phases of production.

For two years I travelled around Italy, looking for farms that could offer me specific experiences and knowledge. I stayed in five different farms learning how to make seedlings at a plant nursery, salami, olive oil and bread.

During this experience I discovered that I was a farmer, and I started dreaming of my own place where I could put to use all that I had learned. And it just so happened that, in that moment, there was the possibility to rent a plot of land...



So together with my wife Stefania, we created our small goat herd, focusing on the production and sale of goat cheese. The best part is that we are not alone; in this small part of Liguria in addition to visits from WWOOFers, we are part of a small network of 5 WWOOF farms that help one another by exchanging goods as well as helping out.”

Mauro, WWOOF host in Italy



Italy

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Seed balls Greece

Learning New Skills

“At a healthy and physically fit 67 years, I can’t express all that I’ve gained by working every day in the garden or on the farm, learning new skills and about best organic practices, and most importantly conversing with others like me about healthy nutrition and habits.”

Don, WWOOFer in the USA



Bee keeping France



Seed saving Croazia

I am a lifelong, dedicated farmer. I teach WWOOFers but I have also had WWOOFers teaching me.

Odile, WWOOF host in France



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Sue at the European WWOOF Meeting in Ireland 2016

Sue Coppard

How WWOOF all began

“On a Friday evening three of us took the train down from London with our work clothes and sleeping bags and spent a blissful weekend in wonderful countryside, working hard at clearing brambles and unblocking ditches, listening to birds, watching the sunset, and chatting with the students at meal times. The high point was a fabulous strawberries-and-cream tea in the barn with pigeons cooing aloft. Magic!

When I first dreamed up WWOOF, back in 1971, I hadn't the remotest notion it would one day become a thriving, worldwide network

with members from so many countries criss-crossing the globe! But WWOOF answers the needs of so many people it had to happen; contact with nature is the psychological equivalent of vitamin C. I feel that WWOOF chose me as its channel - a London secretary with no rural friends or family but pining for the countryside as I watched the autumn leaves blowing along the pavement.

To summarize, I believe WWOOF will continue to prosper - to be 'looked after' - if we continue to do our best to care for the environment and its inhabitants.

May the Light always shine through WWOOF.”

Sue Coppard, founder of WWOOF



Sue at the European WWOOF Meeting in Hungary 2019

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21 Thu Sue's first WWOOFing experience in 1971

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Sweden

Taking care of animals



Germany

“WWOOF is an informal University of Agriculture from which you can receive a degree in the understanding of animals, in herding, in dairy matters and much more. Above all a PHD in happiness and independence.”

Paolo, WWOOFer in Italy



UK



Italy



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Making new friends

You can meet a girl that only after a week of knowing one another, your heart is opened by sharing secrets, and you feel as if you are her best friend chatting the night away telling secrets, sitting on the terrace.

You can find a WWOOFer like you, with whom you can decorate a Christmas tree and create a makeshift cake pan with a vegetable mill, cooking it in the fireplace and feeling like siblings.

You can find a mother that worries about you, concerned whether or not you are eating enough, who makes you sandwiches for the road, who calls you, who asks if you have arrived safely.



You can find people who make you feel as if you are at home, even when there isn't hot water and there are mice who share a room with you, Those who make you feel as if it might be better to spend Christmas with them rather than your own relatives.

For all of these reasons, with WWOOF, I have learned that family is much larger than we ever thought.

Erica, WWOOFer in Italy



“I came to Nepal after 8 months of traveling through South East Asia, and WWOOFing has been such a good way to meet Nepali people who aren't connected with the tourist industry and to see how people live in rural areas. People treated me like a member of the family, and I met people who will remain dear to me.”

Krish, WWOOFer in Nepal



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