

Taralee Orchards : Wwoofer Information

Our family of four owns and manages our 46ha Biodynamic property, located in the Wirrabara Forest area of the Southern Flinders Ranges of South Australia.

The property has been producing fruit for over 100 years. We have lived here since 1998 and obtained 'Demeter' Certification in 2001.

Our location is well suited to stone fruit production, with fertile soil, underground water for irrigation, 650ml average annual rainfall, cold winters and warm to hot summers.

We have 8ha of stone fruit trees, comprising peach, apricot, plum, nectarine and quince with small plantings of persimmon, apple, pear, pomegranate, cherries, fig, walnut and almond.

Other farm enterprises include free range poultry, beef cattle, bees and vegetables. We also have two self contained cottages which we operate as B&Bs. Our guests are able to enjoy the scenic area as well as experience an environmentally sustainable and productive property.

Our harvest period begins in December with early plums and apricots, and finishes in May. During this time we also cut fruit for drying and make jams, chutneys and sauces. The latter are also made throughout the year from frozen and dried fruits. Work for Wwoofers is quite varied, depending on the season.

Summer: Picking, grading, cutting and drying fruit

Autumn: Packing dried fruit, jam making

Winter: Fruit tree planting, jam making

Spring: Gardening, weed control, planting seeds, thinning fruit, mulching

Other ongoing jobs include B&B cleaning, domestic duties, helping at our local market (currently twice per month), landscaping and other small projects.

We expect 5-6 hours of work per day generally in the morning (lunch is at 1.30pm). We expect a positive attitude and an enthusiasm to experience life with us on our property. We attempt to suit the work to your interests and capabilities. We encourage you to cook an evening meal for the family once or twice per week.

Our two children, Raymon and Renae enjoy interacting with Wwoofers, even if you do not have much experience with people of their age (16 and 13), and we welcome you to share in our family life. We are a Christian family and are accepting and broad minded.

A range of accommodation is available: two caravans, a recently built 'Guest Room' adjoining our house, or the B&B if available. We all have meals together. We eat our own free range beef, poultry and other home grown produce, and are happy to have vegetarian meals.

We are 12kms from Wirrabara, and we go in most days to collect our mail and groceries. We have bikes which are available for Wwoofers to use during their time off, and there are many trails for walking and cycling in the Wirrabara Forest.

We are interested in good environmental management and practice 'reduce, reuse, recycle'. We cook on a wood-fired stove, use solar hot water, have a grid feed solar power system, and use only rainwater in the house.

Mobile phone and internet coverage is by Telstra and Vodafone only, so you will need to ensure that you have coverage before you arrive, if that is important to you. Most Wwoofers have their own laptop and USB connection, and we only allow use of our computer for essential matters.

We have an ABN, so can sign the Second Year Work Visa form. However, we do not accept long-term Wwoofers without giving you a trial of a couple of weeks first. If we are all happy, you are welcome to stay for longer. The Wwoofers we enjoy most and who gain most from their stay are those genuinely interested in organic production and in experiencing our family farm lifestyle, whilst working willingly and efficiently.

Remember we are living on a farm and therefore we have animals, bugs, flies, mosquitoes, spiders, lizards, snakes and millipedes at certain times of the year. Summers can be hot and winters can be cold!

However, we live in a peaceful and scenic area, with fresh air, brilliant night skies, and the satisfaction of working with the cycles of nature, and we are willing to share these experiences with you.

Paul, Denise, Raymon and Renae