

Role Scaffold — Head Gardener - Orchard — Uey Kai Garden, DCCG

Drafted: 2026-06-05

Status: Draft — to be confirmed with whoever holds the role.

Template: DCCG Role Scaffold Template.

Purpose of the Scaffold

The Head Gardener - Orchard looks after the garden's perennial planting — the six fruit trees (lemon, mandarin, two feijoas, plum, peach) and three bananas (two Misi Luki, one Goldfinger) named in the Quotes Pack. Care patterns, pruning, mulching, staking, the spiral tree guards already budgeted. One of five Head Gardener roles. Holds horticultural knowledge in this area and votes with the other four on garden-wide horticultural decisions (decision making scaffold).

Why This Matters

Annual beds reset every year. Perennials don't. A fruit tree neglected for two years is harder to recover than a bed neglected for two months. The Head Gardener - Orchard's job is the long view — care that pays off over years.

The application's variety choices reflect long-view thinking: thornless lemon (safe in a community garden with children), easy-peel mandarin, cross-pollinating feijoas, cold-tolerant bananas. The Tender keeps that thinking alive through the trees' first three to five years.

Outcomes of the Scaffold

Poor Outcome. Fruit trees and bananas get planted, then forgotten. Stakes drift. Weeds compete. Pruning doesn't happen. After three years the trees are years behind where they should be.

Expected Outcome. The Tender keeps the trees alive and growing. Weed competition is managed (sheep wool dags, the Eco-Jute weed mats already budgeted, occasional hand-weeding). Pruning happens at the right times.

Excellent Outcome. By year five the fruit trees and bananas are producing well. The Tender has taught knowledge to other gardeners along the way.

Planks of the Scaffold

1. Take the long view

Purpose of the Plank. Perennials reward patience. Decisions made this year about pruning, weed management, and staking show up in three to five years.

Why This Matters. Without the long view, perennial care defaults to short-term thinking, which loses fruit trees in their establishment years.

Poor Outcome. Decisions are made on what looks easiest this weekend. Pruning is skipped because the tree "looks fine."

Expected Outcome. Decisions are made with the three-to-five- year view in mind.

Excellent Outcome. The Tender's planning extends past their own time in the role.

2. The first three years are the work

Purpose of the Plank. Forgotten Fruits' guidance is direct: grass and weed competition is the single biggest cause of fruit tree failure in the first years. Heavy mulching feeds the soil fungi that feed the trees.

Why This Matters. Most fruit trees that fail in the first three years fail to weed competition, not to pests or disease.

Poor Outcome. Mulch dries out and isn't refreshed. Weeds return. The Eco-Jute mats degrade and aren't replaced.

Expected Outcome. Mulching is refreshed seasonally. Weed mats held in place. Spiral guards checked for trunk damage.

Excellent Outcome. The trees thrive.

3. Teach what you know

Purpose of the Plank. Fruit tree and banana care is specialist knowledge. It doesn't transfer just by being nearby. The Tender teaches deliberately — pruning days, mulching demonstrations.

Why This Matters. Without teaching, the orchard side depends on the current Tender forever.

Poor Outcome. The Tender works alone.

Expected Outcome. Pruning days bring out a few gardeners. Some learn basic care.

Excellent Outcome. Several gardeners can prune competently within two years.

4. Hold the role as a tender, not an operator

Purpose of the Plank. non operator norm applies. The Head Gardener - Orchard holds knowledge about perennials. They don't run the orchard side by personal authority. Decisions about adding new trees, replacing failures, or changing the orchard's shape go through the Head Gardener vote and the working group.

Why This Matters. Perennial care can feel like it requires specialist authority. The Plank says it doesn't.

Poor Outcome. "Ask the Head Gardener - Orchard about the trees" becomes the answer to every orchard question.

Expected Outcome. Orchard questions go to the working group. The Tender voices in. Major decisions go to the Head Gardener vote.

Excellent Outcome. A new Head Gardener - Orchard could take over and the trees would continue.

Values

Three values: **the long view** (perennials reward patience); **the first years are the work** (mulch and weed management matter most early); and **patience with what takes time**.

See also: governance, decision making scaffold, horticultural scaffold template, volunteer, non operator norm, pattern disruption norm.