Abstract
The thesis discusses three separate studies regarding understanding for the greening of school
grounds, with special attention paid to the impact and importance of school gardening in relation
to more traditional work in school. The research work is dominated by qualitative methods and
the data collected from totally fourteen infant and junior schools (thirteen Swedish schools and
one British).

The tradition of school gardening in Sweden dates back to the establishment of elementary schools
in the early nineteenth century. The school garden can be seen as both a historically rooted and
action-orientated instrument for school teaching which has always been regarded as a pleasure
for the eye and soul. From having once filled a function of food supply today’s school gardening
is regarded primarily as a sensuous experience that can be used as an educational tool in different
socio-cultural learning situations about for example nature’s ecocycle, environmental issues and
sustainable development. The aim of the school garden has thus shifted from being an end to a
means.

The empirical findings from an interview investigation on school gardening in modern-day Swe-
den in our time call attention to teachers’ experienced lack of support for greening competencies.
This was a main reason behind the idea to test collaborative learning as a tool for answering the
teachers’ demands. A process-orientated case study in two Swedish cities, based on future work-
shops as a platform for local capacity building, was arranged.

The case study was carried through in interaction between stakeholders in the in-school context
and stakeholders from outside the local school, such as school ground planners and school ground
administrators.

The empirical findings indicate that using the future workshop as a research method is a way to
involve the stakeholders as subjects in the production of new knowledge. This means a collabo-
rative production of both articulated and tacit knowledge that can result in new approaches to
school ground management and to the use of the school ground. The thesis indicates that new
approaches could help a school make its outdoor environment more suitable for educational pur-
poses, including gardening.

Language: Swedish / English
Contact: petter.akerblom@sol.slu.se
Download: http://diss-epsilon.slu.se/archive/00000935

PETTER ÅKERBLOM, 2005:
Lära av trädgård. Pedagogiska, historiska och kommunikativa förutsättningar för skolträdgårdsverksamhet
(Learning by gardening. Educational, historical and Communicative Conditions for School Gardens)

Department of Landscape Planning Alnarp, University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden