



OH, HOW BEAUTIFUL IS PANAMA!

My family owns an island in Panama, on which I spend a few months each year. Life there is so much different to that in Europe, and I can only agree with the title of the well-known children's book by Janosch, "Oh, wie schön ist Panama". Here, I get up at sunrise and go to bed at sunset. I live on the island with 8 local cowboys, 10 horses and 300 cattle. We have many spring wells, which are run on solar energy, as the animals consume great quantities of water. We have planted oranges, lemons, mangoes, yucca, avocado and chili. Every day, the workmen harvest 2 fresh coconuts from which I drink. At the end of the work day, the cowboys like to fish, so we often eat fish, lobster, crab or mussels accompanied by rice. Otherwise, any other requirements are obtained from the mainland by boat. On many occasions, I buy produce from passing fishermen. Once a week, I visit the mainland for a day, going to the nearest town. The shopping list must be carefully planned, as not to forget anything. The solar-powered freezer is very useful. In the afternoons, I like to take the canoe to the beach, where I can go hiking for hours without meeting a living soul. At night, it is incredibly quiet on the island, so much so that despite the heat, one wakes up the next morning feeling refreshed!

LADY ISLAND OWNER



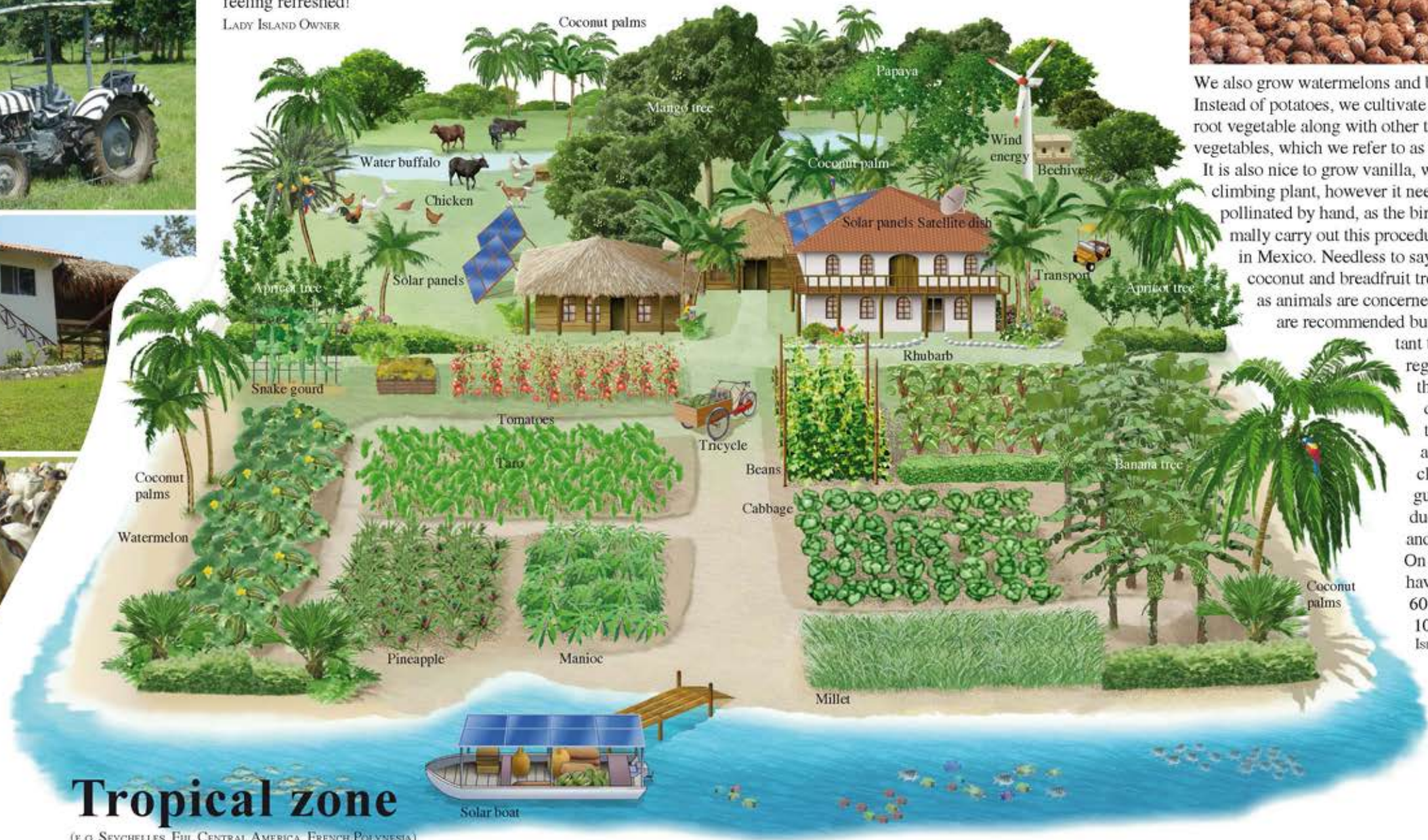
HOW WE RUN A FARM

We operate a farm on D'Arros Island, a private island in the Seychelles. Each farm should have a pond, not only because it looks pretty, but also because many good edible plants can be sown around it. The pond should be at least 5 by 5 metres in size, ideally about 50 by 30 metres. Naturally, the pond water would attract mosquitoes, therefore tilapias (very palatable and protein-rich fish) should be introduced into the pond. Water convolvulus, a spinach-like plant, can be set around the pond. It is very nutritious and only its youngest leaves are used for consumption. It only needs to be set once to produce crop each subsequent year. In order to ensure diversity in our diet, we grow a variety of vegetables, for example pumpkin and Chinese cabbage. Furthermore, climbing plants are very suited, as they do not require much space, such as potol, a very productive plant, whose fruits can reach up to 6 inches in length. Snake gourd is also suited as a vegetable or salad. Rouquet, tomatoes and beans qualify for salads as well. Cucumbers and papaya require a lot of water and absorb many nutrients from the soil. Aubergines are also good, however they require the assistance of ladybirds for pollination.



We also grow watermelons and bananas. Instead of potatoes, we cultivate manioc as a root vegetable along with other types of root vegetables, which we refer to as "La Roue". It is also nice to grow vanilla, which is a climbing plant, however it needs to be pollinated by hand, as the birds that normally carry out this procedure only live in Mexico. Needless to say, we grow coconut and breadfruit trees. As far as animals are concerned, chickens are recommended but it is important to feed them regularly, as they can be quite destructive. Other animals include rabbits, guinea pigs, ducks, geese and turkeys. On occasions, I have also kept 60 cows and 100 pigs.

ISLAND MANAGER



Tropical zone

(E.G. SEYCHELLES, FIJI, CENTRAL AMERICA, FRENCH POLYNESIA)