

# Being a Shiva Diva at Mezzacello

I post a lot on here about the urban ag technology and methods I employ at Mezzacello. The fact is, I just find it all so fascinating – and counter to everything our society expects. What can I say? I am an iconoclast. I think that the fact that you need to be comfortable with failure, death, life, and ecologies and unlearn everything modern life teaches you is what attracts me so. I am a rebel with a cause; I am Shiva, the creative spark and destroyer of worlds only with a bow tie and a fedora. Yeah, I get a little crazy about it. But it's wonderful the way social mores, biology, chemistry, engineering, physics, and math just coalesce on an urban farm. There are many days where I swear I feel the joy that the great Enlightenment scientists must have felt when they began fleshing out the roots of the modern sciences from the ruins of alchemy. The age of discovery and all that. Yeah, I identify with that.

Of all the useful items at Mezzacello, trash is one of the most productive. All trash, food and everything else – with a few toxic and material exceptions – is useful in an urban ag ecosystem. You just have to be ready for that reality mentally, physically, and spiritually.

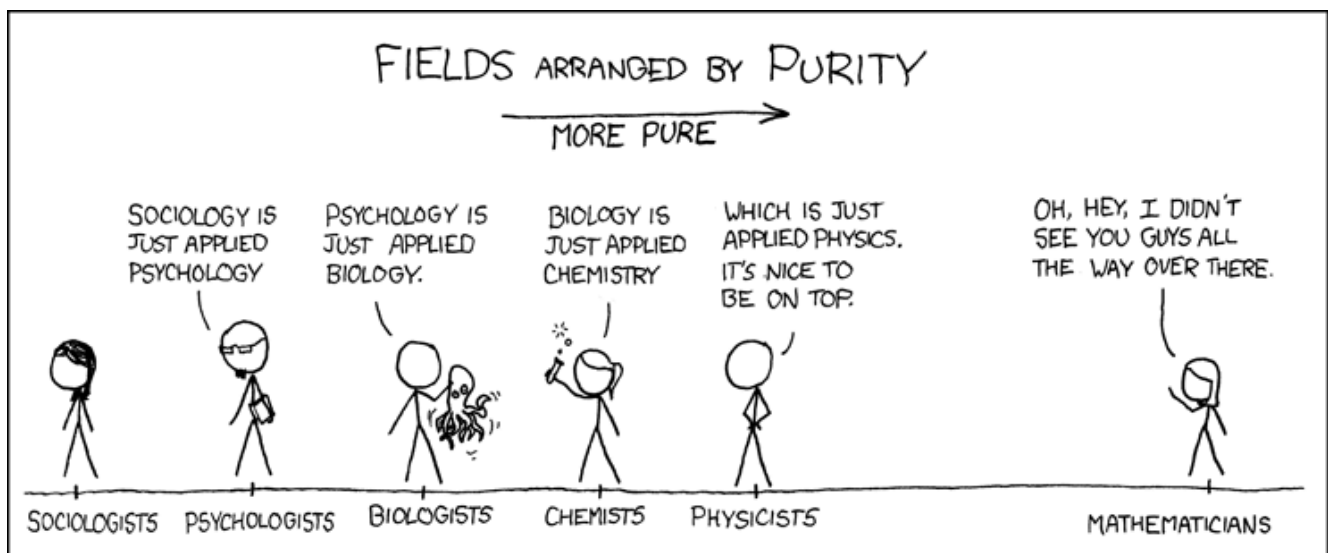
- Mentally because it requires a new and dangerous mindset: You will become a hoarder with a desire to save everything.
- Physically because you will need systems in place to keep yourself healthy and keep nature's pests at bay.
- Spiritually because you will need courage and fortitude to power through some of the more disgusting and smelly pathways to sustainability.

But the journey is so worth it and absolutely fascinating.

It's akin to alchemy, but you know in your heart there is no cheat against nature. House rules win every time.

This morning I turned some banana peels, used coffee grounds, and discarded egg shells into compost seed starter and fabulous soil amendment. It will have to sit for two weeks at which point I will either add it directly to fall beds or brew it with water, glucose and an airstone to create super rich liquid fertilizer. Add some uric acid and ammonia (urine) and you have liquid gold or all the makings for a bomb. **THIS IS NOT FOR USE AS A BOMB.** But it is a tour de force of #AppliedSTEM. No waste and the side effect is more life, sign me up! An interesting side note: Amazon's algorithm actually called me out on some of my purchases for salts and liquid amendments I ordered online. Reminding me that certain combinations of chemicals can flag me due to provisions of the patriot act. So I end up making a lot of my own chemical amendments.

The way all the sciences cascade in this applied science experiment makes me think of one of my favorite XKCD Cartoons:



[/media-credit] XKCD cartoon called "Purity" It's funny because it's essentially true.

Use your powers for good – even if they stink. And there will be stink. Wink.