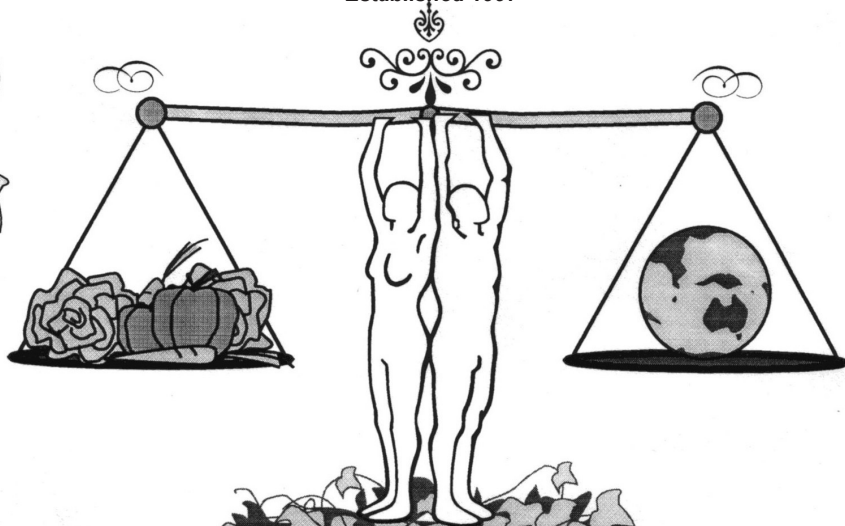


GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



NEWSLETTER

Volume 22 - FEBRUARY 2018 Issue 2
GARDENING IN SUMMER

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 15th March 2018

Notice Board

1. **To promote organic sustainable food raising for home gardens and farms.**
2. **To foster research into improved methods of organic farming and gardening.**
3. **To provide information and support to all those interested in the various aspects of organic growing.**

Meetings Held:

3rd Thursday of the Month

The Meeting Place, Cnr Guineas Creek Rd and Coolgardie St, Elanora.

Doors open: 7:00 pm. **Begin at 7:30 pm**

Entry is \$1 members, \$3 visitors.

(No meeting in December)

Annual Membership Fees:

Single: \$20. Family: \$30.

To renew or start memberships please transfer funds directly into our bank account, send cheques (payable to GCOG) to Diane Kelly, or just pay at the door.

Name: Gold Coast Organic Growers

Bank: Suncorp

BSB: 484-799

Account: 0014-21651

Seed Bank:

Packets are \$2.00 each.

Members' Market Corner:

Please bring plants, books and produce you wish to sell or trade.

Raffle Table:

This relies on the kind generosity of members to donate items on the night. Tickets - \$1 each or 3 for \$2.

Library:

Books 50c, Videos, DVDs \$2, Soil Test Kit \$2. Available to members for 1 month.

Advertising: (Note 11 issues/year)

1/4 page: \$10 an issue, or \$100 per year

1/2 page: \$20 an issue or \$200 per year

full page: \$30 an issue or \$300 per year

W: www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/gcorganic

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Librarians	Ann Brown 0403 936 360 Dayne Petersen
Seed Bank Seed Assistants	Lyn Mansfield 0409 645 888 Maggie Golightly Bill Smart
Supper Co-ordinator	Heather Ryan 0409 577 499 Deb Phillips

Newsletter Contributions are welcome. Send in a photo of what's going on in your patch. **Deadline for contributions is the one week before the meeting.** Send your content to Dorothy Coe at: dorothy@dorothycoe.com

Notice Board

Membership Renewals

NEW: You can now pay your membership fee directly into the GCOG bank account.

Name: Gold Coast Organic Growers
Bank: Suncorp
BSB: 484-799
Account: 0014-21651

Remember to put your Name and Membership Number in the comment field.

Note the number in brackets after your name is your membership number - you will need to quote this number in the comment field, if you pay via online banking.

Membership Renewals – February 2018:

Overdue: Barbara Talty (58), Warren and Beverly Carlson (87), Wolfgang Dempsey (258), Geraldine McDonald (354), Caroline Li (395), Lieu Searston (412), Michael Cuthbertson (396), Anne Butler (398), Barbara Westmore (413), Evelyn Douglas (383), Megan Keeler (358), Marion Symons (155), William & Tracey Chen (400), Micheline Lazaroo (401), Ira Appel (417), John Drakes (418)

February: Barry O'Rourke (185), Roger & Pauline Behrendorff (232), Andrew & Helen Blum (344), Danny Li (384), Bill & Susan Smart (386), Alan Ralph (394), Kerry Lason (402), Katrina Julienne & Finn Eber (419)

March: Angela Anderson (323), Lana Beloff (363), Maggie Golightly (365), Fran Janes (366), Rachael Lebeter (367), Tricia Oh (368), Bev Geraghty (404), Liz Grippo (405), Stacey Panozzo (420), Julie Abraham (421), Rebecca Bowen (422), Lorraine McArthur (423)

Latest newsletter can be downloaded from the site at goldcoastorganicgrowers.org

Thanks to Contributors this month:

Diane Kelly, Dorothy Coe, Jill Barber, & Jorge Cantellano.

Upcoming Guest Speakers

We are currently seeking Guest Speakers for throughout 2018. If you have an idea for a potential speaker, or a topic that you think would interest our members, please contact Rachael at rachaellebeter@gmail.com

Workshops

Abilities Plus – Permaculture

For more information and bookings contact Lyn Mansfield M: 0409 645 888

E: lynmansfield14@bigpond.com
W: <http://abilitiespluspermaculture.com/>

Ediblescapes Workshops

Every 2nd Saturday of the Month at Country Paradise Parkland – Nerang.

Contact us for details on our upcoming workshops and events or to get actively involved in the EdibleScapes project.

Email: Contact@ediblescapes.org
www.facebook.com/n.ediblescapes/
<http://ediblescapes.org/>



Can We Help?

In the section BELOW our members can ask about cuttings, seeds or plants that they would like to obtain, or where we could let others know about anything that we might have spare and would like to share around.

So if you would like to let the Club members know about any particular plant you are looking for, or if you can help out and provide a plant that someone has asked for please email Dorothy with the details at dorothy@dorothycoe.com

Offers / Wants / Swap / Share

EDIBLE PLANTS, TREES, CUTTINGS DONATIONS OR SWAP REQUIRED

To support the start up of EdibleScapes (Edible Landscape Gardens) at Nerang they are looking for donations of Edible Plants, Fruit Trees, Seedlings & Cuttings.

This will help them get the public edible landscape established.

If you can help now or in the future please contact Jorge at: contact@ediblescapes.org

PLANT POTS, NATIVE PLANTS, EDIBLE TREES, SEEDLINGS, CUTTINGS REQUIRED

Cathy Beard's Murwillumbah project update. Due to stolen, destroyed pot plants and garden I have lost all my plants to donate to Murwillumbah so I have decided to collect seeds and collate a little hub for them to donate to new gardeners and encourage growth in their backyards.

I have also started the GROW FREE on the Gold Coast. The facebook page was formed last week so please join in this new movement. [GROW FREE!! Gold Coast](#)

Urban Food Security

While there is clear evidence of increasing public interest in Australia in food, especially in its preparation and consumption, the popularity of growing one's own food in backyards, community and school gardens and on roadside verges appears also to be increasing.

At the same time public health experts continue to warn of the consequences of eating unhealthily and press for a shift in the dietary balance of most Australians away from highly processed foods with high levels of salt, fats and sugars to more fresh fruit and vegetables.

It is not surprising that little policy attention is paid to threats to urban food supply lines or to broader conceptions of urban food security and food sovereignty. The experience of the Victorian government's promotion of a more holistic approach to state-wide food policy in recent years demonstrates the potential for state action to enable and encourage exemplary and innovative action at the neighbourhood scale in cities and peri-urban areas.

That same experience also demonstrates the fragility of these policy initiatives. It is important to recognise also that the food supply lines to all Australian cities are vulnerable to a number of threats, especially those increased by climate change, such as floods, fires and storms.

With this recognition, alongside an acknowledgement that urban and peri-urban agriculture in all its forms can play a part making Australian cities more food secure, there is scope to develop a set of policy measures across all levels of government that support and enhance local initiatives.

Source: Urban food security, urban resilience and climate change, 2013.

Source: (Paul Burton is a co-author of this report. Paul became an EdibleScapes advisor board member.

THANK YOU

We would like to thank the following businesses for their support of our bumper Raffle:

Islands in the Stream
Worm-castings and vermiculture - Up-cycling through Nature
<http://islandsinthestream.com.au>

How to Make White Oil

Make your own white oil emulsion to suffocate scale pests. It only costs a few cents and is very effective. This is what to do:

- Mix 1 cup of cheap cooking oil with half a cup of water in a blender. Add a teaspoon of washing-up detergent.
- Measure off some of the resulting creamy “mayonnaise” and mix it with 40 parts of water.
- Spray it over all parts of the canopy, especially beneath the leaves. Do this once a week for a month. The sooty mould gradually disappears over the next few weeks.
- Store any remaining homemade white oil concentrate in a jar in a safe place.



Source: Gardening Australia magazine

How to Grow Capsicum Rainbow



When & where to plant

In spring or summer, choose the sunniest part of your vegetable patch to plant capsicums. They require heat to enable their fruit to ripen. Make sure the soil is deep enough to anchor their extensive root system. Do not plant them where other members of the Solanaceae family (eggplants, potatoes, tomatoes) have previously grown.

How to plant

If sowing directly into garden beds, dig in some Searles Garden Soil Mix and add lime if the soil is more acid than 6.5. Add Searles Vegetable & Herb Organic Kickalong to the soil to facilitate good root development, and give the bed a long, deep soak of water before planting. Plant seed or seedlings, following the packet or label directions and make sure young seedlings never dry out.

How to maintain

Keep the roots cool by covering with a light mulch throughout the warmer months. Ensure the soil is kept constantly moist and weed free. Fertilise fortnightly. Capsicums can be treated as perennial plants, performing best in their second year. Simply cut them back after fruiting has finished in late autumn and they'll shoot again the following spring.

Source: <http://www.aboutthegarden.com.au/index.php/how-to-grow-capsicums/>

Submitted by: Jorge C.

The Garden of Small Beginnings

Quotes from “The Garden of Small Beginnings” by Abbi Waxman Submitted by: Dianne Kelly

I enjoyed reading a novel over Christmas that told of a lady who joined a gardening class – and the bonus was that each chapter had a hint at the beginning about gardening. I hope you find these of interest:

Three basics of soil chemistry:

Nitrogen is vital for leaves and stems, and promotes the dark green colour we admire in broccoli, cabbage, greens and lettuce.

Phosphorus promotes the strong and early growth of roots and shoots. It is also necessary for setting blossoms and developing fruit, and is important for those edibles that develop after the flowers have been pollinated – cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes etc.

Potassium makes plants vigorous and strong, resistant to stress and disease, and tasty as well. Carrots, radishes, turnips, onions and garlic would be lost without it.

A hint for tomatoes: If the weather is particularly dry, find some flat rocks and place one next to each plant. The rocks pull up water from under the ground and keep it from evaporating into the atmosphere.

Cucumbers: When growing cucumbers, occasionally put your finger in the soil to test the moisture level. If it is dry past the first joint of your finger, get out the watering can. If you can't pull your finger out, you are overwatering. Inconsistent watering leads to bitter-tasting fruit.

Growing pumpkins: You will need a spot with plenty of room and plenty of sun. The soil will warm up more quickly and the seeds germinate faster if you plant them in little hills. Plant seeds an inch deep into the hills (4 to 5 seeds per hill). Space hills 4 to 8 feet apart. When the plants are 2 to 3 inches tall, thin to

2 to 3 plants per hill by snipping off unwanted plants without disturbing the roots of the remaining ones.

Zucchini need full sun and moist, well-drained soil. Mulch plants to protect their shallow roots and retain moisture. Water deeply once a week, applying at least one inch of water. Make sure the soil is moist at least 4 inches down.

And why can cabbage be smelly? When you are preparing dinner, and think your cabbage has an unpleasant aroma, it is because you are over-cooking it. Cook it for too long and it produces hydrogen sulphide. So now we know!

Q: What is the maddening, frustrating, soul-destroying part of gardening?

A: It is never done!

Q: What is the nice thing about gardening?

A: It is never done!



Organic

Efficient seed collection

Place paper bags over flowers going to seed and hold each one in place with a small plastic tie. Avoid using polythene bags, which do not let in the air. Once the stems are dry, cut each one just below the tie and shake it so that the seeds fall into the paper bag. Label the bag. Cut stems of seeding celery, carrots, dill and fennel when the outer seeds are brown. Hang upside-down, tied in paper bags.



Source: Readers Digest

Open Weekend — Herb Farm

Mud Brick Cottage Herb Farm

Visitors are invited to stroll around the herb gardens and enjoy the sights and scents of herbs. More than 400 varieties of herbs and cottage garden plants available for purchase.

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GC Visitors Guide 2013

Training Water-wise Plants

There are many ways to establish water-wise plants. If you haven't already, try some of these tips:

1. Don't forget that many nursery plants have been grown under controlled conditions and are used to regular watering. Consequently, they may need to be gradually introduced to the harsher conditions of the home garden.
2. Water your garden thoroughly at well-spaced intervals rather than applying light sprinklings so as to encourage strong, deep root growth.
3. Direct water to the drip line (a line around the plant's outer foliage).
4. Water in the evenings or the early mornings to give the water a chance to be absorbed by the plant rather than evaporating.
5. Even drought-tolerant plant varieties will probably require regular watering until they have become properly established.
6. Try to avoid staking as this can encourage plants to grow a smaller root system. If you need to stake (for instance to protect the plant in windy areas), use three stakes wrapped with a strip of soft fabric (like an old stocking) to form a triangle that supports rather than pins the plant. This can be removed when the plant has grown sturdy enough to support itself.

Source: Your Garden Summer 2004



Survival Tricks

1. **Hairy situation:** Many plants, such as lavender and lambs' ears, have adapted by developing hairy leaves that minimize moisture loss caused by intense ultraviolet (UV) rays, low humidity and drying winds.
2. **Purple power:** Plants that have purple-coloured undersides to their leaves, such as begonia, have adapted to the low-light conditions of the forest floors. The purple pigment in their leaves maximises their ability to photosynthesise in the greenish light. They succeed best in similar conditions, indoors or out.
3. **Self healing:** Dicotyledonous plants, such as woody trees, have adapted to healing any wounds on their bark by sealing the cells adjacent to the wound with fungus-fighting resins. Monocotyledonous plants such as plants lack this, and so cannot heal wounds as effectively as trees. Large wounds can be fatal, so avoid injuring palm trunks with brush-cutters or mowers.
4. **Super roots:** Members of the Proteaceae family, such as Banksia and grevillea, have become proficient at growing in soils low in phosphorus. Their proteid roots are adapted to seek out any available phosphorus. A high level of phosphorus can cause death, so always use a low-phosphorus fertiliser.
5. **Smoky water:** About 20 years ago, scientists discovered that water containing chemicals from bushfire smoke greatly improves the germination of plants such as flannel flower and smokebush, which have adapted to fire-prone habitat. This smoke-infused water even helps the germination of some common crops, such as carrot.

Source: Gardening Australia, June 2008

Veggie & Seed Swap

EdibleScapes are organising a monthly Veggie & Seed Swap activity to be happen every 2nd Saturday of the Month at Country Paradise Parkland – Nerang. The invitation is open for all gardeners who want to exchange their excess home grown or homemade healthy produces and to meet other organic growers for morning tea and chat.

After two successful previous veggie swaps last year (June and November 2017), we will continue montly due to the popular demand.

EdibleScapes 2017 swap and other activities, were organised as an active waiting period. Since early 2017, the concept for a public edible landscape garden open to the community at the parkland has an 'approve in principal but not yet digging permission'. The indication is that soon in early 2018, the parkland manager association will meet with our EdibleScapes committee to settle an agreement to bring this vision into reality.

The first two swaps last year were organised with the help of Dorothy Coe and member of Veggie Swap Gold Coast - this group meet regularly at the Gold Coast Organic Growers Club on the 3rd Thursday of each month at Elanora and time to time meet as well at the Southern Beach Community Gardens at Tugun. More more info on Veggie Swap Gold Coast see their FB page / groups [veggieswapgoldcoast](#)

If you're not familiar with the concept of a Veggie Swap, here's how it works: People bring their excess garden produce to share. This could be seeds, seedlings, veggies, cuttings and/or fruit. People take what they need. No money is exchanged.

That's right, no money changes hands, swap is for sharing rather than trading, just a friendly swap of produce, knowledge and conversation.



Cathy Beard, at the right and Dorothy Coe and Baz on the left, Veggie Swap at 'Eat Your Backyard' event host by Mermaid Waters Multicultural Garden on the 4th November 2017.

"Do you grow fruit, herbs or vegetables at home?"

If you have excess, then come to the Country Paradise Parkland to swap, **every 2nd Saturday of each the Month.**
10:00 am to 12:00

What to bring: A smile and your produce – any fresh homegrown food, seeds, honey etc.

Meet us near the Edible Landscape Gardens site project at Country Paradise Parkland. 68 Billabirra Cres, Nerang

Everyone is welcome!

More info - contact Jorge at contact@ediblescapes.org

Organiser: *EdibleScapes, a nonprofit community social & ecological services organisation. Our mission is to produce, maintain and promote public edible gardens.*

visit [www.ediblescapes.orgFB / n.ediblescapes/](http://www.ediblescapes.orgFB/n.ediblescapes/)

Share 
the  Veg 

If you Only do One Thing this Month – Grow some Chives!

By Diane Kelly

The other night I didn't feel like cooking a big meal, and seeing I had left-over corned beef and mushrooms in the fridge, I decided to make some scrambled eggs. But, of course, scrambled eggs don't taste their best unless they have a bit of the onion family added, so I went out and picked some chives.

My chive patch has survived the hot weather – and their neglect over the Christmas holidays – and still had plenty of leaves to add flavour to our meal. So my recommendation is for the coming month – plant some chives! When I started to look through my gardening books, I was surprised to see how much mention was made of chives – there are several types; several growing methods; and many uses of this wonderful herb.



Chives are described as being part of the *Allium* species. The generic name *Allium* in the Latin actually means “to avoid”, which I guess is reasonable, seeing the family includes onions, garlic, scallion, shallots, leeks and – of course- chives. Plants of the *Allium* genus produce their characteristic taste and

odour from chemical compounds called “cysteine sulfoxides” – and that goes into the actual atom make-up of the plant, so we shall return to gardening! However it was of interest to note that the usual “onion” flavour of these plants or herbs is conditional upon the sulfate content of the soil in which they grow. It is actually possible to remove all pungency from the *Allium* family if you grow them in sulfur-free conditions.

Types of Chives:

There are three main varieties of chives – the ones with the tubular leaves that we are familiar with, and then “garlic chives” (also known as Chinese chives) and “society chives” – the ones with no aroma. Garlic and society chives have flat leaves, but are grown in the same way as the standard plants.

How to grow chives:

Chives are happy to grow in any good garden soil in a sunny or semi-shaded position. And, of course, they do well in pots or window boxes. As well as an edible plant, they also make an attractive border to your veggie plot, and are excellent attractors of pollinating insects. Standard chives tend to die down in winter, but garlic chives will survive well during those months.

Chives can be grown from seedlings or seeds, or by dividing existing plants. Plant seedlings 30cm apart so they have space to multiply – but remember to remove their flowers so that the plants increase in size. It is a good idea to divide up the clumps in autumn every three years and replant them to keep the plants fresh – just ensure they are put in fresh ground that has been dressed with well-rotted compost. Rust is the only disease likely to affect chives – this can be counteracted by removing diseased shoots and stems; improving the soil; and increasing the air circulation. Neem oil is an alternative treatment.

Harvesting chives:

Cut the leaves close to the ground as required, and use up all of a clump before mov-

ing onto the next – in this way each plant will soon grow a new crop of leaves.

Obviously the best part of chives is in the eating:

- The unopened flower buds of both garlic and onion chives can be used in stir-fries. Alternatively, break up the globular flower head into individual blooms and add them to a salad, or use them as a garnish. The flavour is particularly good with potato, pasta or rice salads.
- Finely chopped chive leaves can be used as a garnish for salads and sauces, and for flavouring egg (especially scrambled!) and cheese dishes, and salad dressings. Chives are an essential ingredient of tartare sauce, to serve with fish.
- Easily chop chives by holding a bunch in one hand and snipping them with kitchen scissors.
- Sprinkle chopped chives on to tomato and egg sandwiches.
- Fold chopped chives into ricotta or cottage cheese, creamy mashed potatoes and dips, and mix them into vegetable and cucumber salads.
- Chive butter: Garnish meat, fish and poultry dishes with a simple chive butter:
 1. Soften 100g butter in a small bowl, then blend together thoroughly with 4 tablespoons of finely chopped chives.
 2. Roll the butter into a sausage shape, wrap it in damp baking paper and chill the roll in the fridge. Cut into narrow slices. Stamp out shapes with a small biscuit cutter and use as a garnish.



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ENJOY !!

Hints for “All Things Gardening” by Diane Kelly

Christmas is now past, but one of my presents will come in handy for a long time – Tim Marshall’s book “Composting”. So we start off this month’s hints with some suggestions for making good compost.

Firstly, why should we add compost to our gardens?

- Compost helps soil retain more moisture – I am sure we all know that, but also...
- Compost helps soil recover more rapidly from the effects of wheel or foot traffic, and cultivation
- Compost provides easy passage for earthworms and plant roots
- Compost insulates plant roots from temperature extremes

A few hints about what to put in our compost:

1. Be aware that before deciduous trees drop their leaves, they transfer the nutrients to other parts of the plant. Therefore deciduous leaf mould is not high in nutrients. Autumn leaves are mainly composed of cellulose, which is slow and difficult to break down.
2. Dandelions: These plants are known to be iron accumulators, in the same way as bracken accumulates potassium. Collected and added to your garden waste bin, it can form an iron-rich compost.
3. Comfrey is, of course, a well-known additive to compost. Here’s how to apply it:
 - Place alternative layers of leaf mould and freshly shredded or layered comfrey leaves in a barrel or rubbish bin.
 - Use the compost when the comfrey leaves look grey and shrivelled and fall apart when touched.
 - This compost provides very readily available nutrients for young plants



Now on to some other veggie hints:

1. We’ve nearly run out of time to plant sweet corn, but if you do put in some seeds or seedlings, make sure the soil is thoroughly enriched so you get a good crop. Find a warm, sunny position in your backyard, and make sure it is out of the wind. As the seedlings grow into plants, keep hilling soil around the base so that they do not get blown over. This also encourages the uptake of water and nutrients, so that side-growths or “tillers” can grow, and they can produce additional cobs.
2. **Egg-plants** can be grown now as well. Allow enough garden space for the fact that they have a growing season of five months. Eggplants have the same pest and disease problems as tomatoes and capsicums – fruit fly, wilt disease and root-rotting fungi. To counteract these, incorporate large amounts of organic matter into the soil, and don’t plant any members of the Solanaceae family in the same plots for at least 3 or 4 years.
3. **Kale** – to be planted in March: If growing seedlings, plant them up to their necks – ensure that the first set of true leaves are at ground level. This creates a more stable plant, and helps established crops not to topple over.
4. **STRAWBERRIES!!** Plant them during February to May. Only plant the roots into the soil, ensuring that the point where the leaf stalks start to emerge from the crown sits at ground level. If you bury the base of the stems, you will also bury the crown – and it is the crown where the growing point is. If you do that, the plant will be pre-disposed to crown rot.

Jill's Garden Update

By Jill Barber

February 2018

This summer, I decided to try to keep growing some things, especially salad greens, but also carrots and whatever else might cooperate. I reasoned that the shade cloth over the beds would stop them frying, and I could survive the heat by going out in the earlier part of the morning. I'd also get some green manure crops in asap, starting in December. That way, I could keep eating organic greens plus set up a bed or two for brassicas to go in earlier than I'd managed in past years.

Well, that was the plan, and I'd say that I've had some success. So far, I've planted four of our eight beds with green manure (cow pea, Japanese millet, lab lab beans, buckwheat and old seeds saved from my garden), chopped down and forked under two of those (bring on the brassicas: I'm ready for you!), and in the other two, seedlings are appearing already.

As for the vegies, there have been more carrots for us than in past years, due to the on-going, early, successive plantings. However, I noticed that the latest planted ones were taking a long time to grow much, as were the beets, and Maria recently explained this to me: the soil is too warm for them and other vegies to grow in summer, particularly at this time. Just don't plant anything for a month at least; put in more green manure. It's a great way to fertilise your garden!



Green Manure ready to be cut down and forked under.

Other vegies tend to bolt before they can produce much, like coriander, of course, and my silverbeet always goes discoloured and misshapen in summer. Even our parsley, which was self-planted everywhere and has been prolific, just has a "worn out" look and is "giving up the ghost" by threatening to bolt.

Nevertheless, some marvellous greens have persisted, such as three different varieties of kale, surunam spinach, tatsoi, mukunu wenna, climbing spinach, a couple of little mizuna plants, two different basil, mint and the everlasting rosemary. This year, after the wonderfully abundant parsley, the rocket has chosen to shine, growing strongly for an extended period of time now, without bolting. Also, several of those plants have straight-edged leaves, alongside others with the usual scalloped edges: they look just like silverbeet, and all are much more potent than those in shops!



We did have some sweet potato at the beginning of summer... though that bed is now a green manure one, with turmeric down the side. I loved the Jerusalem arti-

chokes, though most of my plants died off early, for some unknown reason. Coming along are the ginger plants, the lemon grass, which is "going great guns", after a severe, end-of-last-season pruning back, and the jicama yams (seen climbing up the trellis).

On a final note, I've been trying Evelyn's weed killer (vinegar, salt and detergent), which she gave us the recipe for last year, on the weeds between



some pavers, etc. to great effect, and now I'm trying it on oxalis and nut grass. Watch this space next month for this continuing saga.

Rosellas

You will never see this rosella taking flight above the eucalypts. The rosella I am referring to is a warm-climate plant noted for its attractiveness and versatile fruit. It is a member of the hibiscus family (*Hibiscus sabdai iffa*) that grows to 1 1/2 metres tall, with a one-metre spread and has many branches.

I grow the common red variety with red stems and fruit. This bush is attractive, it is worthy of a place in the garden for that reason alone. A rare yellow variety also exists.

Growing rosellas: The rosella is an annual. Seeds are sown into seed trays or directly where required after any frosts are over. Space plants 60 centimetres apart in rows in full sun. A bush or two retained from last season's crop will self-sow and seedlings can be transplanted as required. The typical hibiscus-like flowers will start to form when the plant is about 30 centimetres high. Five or six bushes will produce a good supply of fruit for a family.

Good watering and a humus-rich bed will ensure a copious crop of fruit. Leaf-eating insects are the main worry that I have.

Harvesting: For some recipes it is necessary to detach the seed pod from the calyx. This can be done manually. To prepare large quantities you might want to develop a simple coring tool to speed up the task. I start with a 25-centimetre length of copper tube with about a one-centimetre internal diameter. Sharpen one end to a cutting edge by filing or simply by rotating it on a concrete surface. Now bend the tube by 90 degrees at the middle; one half has the cutting edge and the other is the handle. To separate the seed pod insert the cutting

edge over the stem and push into the pod. Each calyx separates neatly and the pod is attached to the end of the tool.



Time to indulge

Rosella salad: The calyx is edible raw. It can be added to salads and, sliced finely, to coleslaw. It will add that red colour to both.



Rosella liquid: This is my favourite way of cooking the fruit, and it is the simplest. After washing the calyxes place them in a saucepan and press down to compact them a bit. Add water to about half the depth of the fruit. Bring to the boil and allow to simmer for about half an hour. Strain off liquid. Without any added sugar this produces a tangy red liquid to store in the refrigerator. I then spoon it onto cereals and over dessert. Of course,

boiling in some sugar syrup will produce a thicker, sweeter liquid.



Rosella jam: Rosella jam is well known throughout Queensland. Most recipes require the separation of the pods from the calyxes, as in the traditional recipe below. Rosella jelly is another variation.

Separate pods from calyxes. Place pods into a saucepan, cover with water and simmer for an hour with lid on. Strain off the pods and keep the liquid. Place calyxes into a clean saucepan, pour the liquid over them and boil for 20 minutes. Add one cup of sugar for each of the pulp and boil without the lid for 20 to 30 minutes, until jam sets when tested on cold saucer. Pour into sterilized jar and seal.

Source: Brisbane Organic Growers - March 2006



Simple Inter-Cropping

In nature, some plants occur in their own communities, while others comfortably share space with different species. The sharing kind, such as squat, shade-loving plants, can grow quite well beneath tall, sun-seeking species.

Observant gardeners over the centuries have developed a practice called inter-cropping (or inter-planting) that combines different species in order to increase variety and total field from a given area. The Aztecs, for example, grew corn, beans and squash together. These days, permaculture-designed gardens attempt to emulate this aspect of nature in the perennial garden.

The main principles that gardeners apply when choosing an inter-crop are:

- Layering sun-loving and shade-tolerant species
- Considering root architecture – placing deep-rooted and shallow-rooted species appropriately
- Using fast-maturing and slow-maturing species to fill niches in time
- Combining plants with complementary forms, such as spreading and narrow shapes.

Source: Hogan Gleeson Organic Gardener 200

NOTE: NEW DEADLINE DATE FOR NEWS-LETTER SUBMISSIONS IS ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

Recipes

PINEAPPLE BUTTER CAKE

This super moist and buttery pineapple cake is sure to make your family and friends very happy. Once you see how easy it is to create this delicious cake you'll be making it all the time!

Author: Chef Dennis Littley

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter 120 g
- 2 cups chopped pineapple 300 g
- 2/3 cup all purpose flour 80 g
- 1/2 tsp baking powder 2.5 g
- 1/2 tsp salt 2.5 g
- 2 whole eggs plus 1 egg yolk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract 5 ml
- 1 cup granulated sugar 200 g
- 1/2 tsp grated lemon zest 2.5 g
- Confectioners sugar to dust

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F (177 C),
2. Butter a 9" round cake pan
3. In a large frying pan over low heat, melt the butter, reserve 6 tbs (90 g) for later. Add the pineapple and cook for about 10 minutes. **do not use any of the juice from the pan only the pineapple
4. In a small bowl mix together flour, salt and baking powder.
5. In a large bowl beat the whole eggs and egg yolks until blended.
6. Add the reserved melted butter, sugar, vanilla and lemon zest.
7. Stir in flour and pineapple.

8. Spoon into prepared pan, smoothing the top.
9. Bake until cake is browned, 30-35 minutes.
10. Transfer to a wire rack to cool in pan for 5 minutes. Invert cake onto plate to remove the pan and then invert again and return to rack to cool completely.
11. Before serving Dust with confectioners sugar



Source: <https://www.askchefdennis.com/pineapple-butter-cake-and-ask-chef-dennis/>

Submitted by: Jill Barber

Thank you to those leaving their name with their Supper Table offering so we can ask you for the ingredients/recipe!

Please email your yummy recipes to Jill jillbarber611@gmail.com



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**WE NEED YOUR
CONTENT HERE**

**SEND US SOME TIPS ABOUT
GARDENING THAT YOU HAVE
DISCOVERED OR PERHAPS SOME
INFO ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING
IN YOUR GARDEN.**

**NOTE: THE NEW DEADLINE FOR
SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEWSLET-
TER IS ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE
MEETING.**

Citrus Trees

Although citrus trees are not difficult to grow, there are a few pitfalls. Here are some common growing and planting errors.

- 1. Planting in poor soil.** Citrus need very well-drained soil. A slightly acidic, loamy soil is ideal. Before planting, dig in a good amount of well-rotted organic matter. In poorly drained conditions, grow citrus in large pots or raised beds, or plant on top of the soil and mound a mix of quality soil and compost around the roots.
- 2. Underfeeding.** Citrus need large amounts of fertiliser to sustain growth and good fruiting. Feed monthly from the first sign of spring until the end of December, with a complete citrus food or organic fertilizer.
- 3. Ignoring problems.** Citrus trees can be plagued by scale, aphids, fruit fly, leaf miner, bronze orange bug and spined citrus bug. Look for early signs, such as curling or chewed leaves, or a general decline in health. If you spot the problem early you can usually solve it by picking off and squashing bugs or spraying with pest oil.
- 4. Planting them in shade.** Citrus trees need full sun. They will grow in some shade, particularly in hot areas, but produce lots of leafy growth and less fruit, if there's not enough light.
- 5. Inconsistent watering.** Citrus trees are shallow-rooted, so to keep them in tip-top condition, given them a reasonably consistent supply of water, especially when they are young or when fruit is developing. If not, maturing fruit may split.
- 6. Letting young plants crop.** It's best to remove developing fruit on a young tree for one to two years after planting so it can put its energy into growth and development. This results in a healthier plant with a good framework for fruiting. Even with mature plants, it's worth thinning heavy crops so the tree doesn't exhaust itself.

Source: Gardening Australia Magazine 2006

FRUIT TREES

FEBRUARY

Custard Apples: Peak water needs. Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1 kg for mature trees and ½ kg for young trees.

Figs: Net trees to protect figs from birds. Pick fruit every two days. Fertilise with 1 kg organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash.

Low shill stone fruit: Moderate water needs.

Lychee: Peak water needs. Mulch trees. This is a good time to “skirt” trees (skirt-trim all growth to 500mm above ground). Prune so 20% light can be seen through trees. If Erinose mite is a problem, spray with wettable sulphur every 10 to 14 days from pin head size new growth to fully open, and harden off.

Mango: Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash. Keep up water. Prune trees after harvest. Pruning: If it is a very large tree that needs to be pruned to a manageable size, the correct way is to cut back 1/3 of branches each year for three years. In the first year remove one of the largest branches, the following year remove another branch, and so on until the tree is of an acceptable shape and size. In this way you will have some fruit each year while at the same time reducing the size of the tree. Spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose every fortnight.

Passion-fruit: Keep up the water.

Pawpaw: Plant pawpaws in threes (thin out to strongest). Plant out seedlings as the soil is still warm and by Autumn they will be stabilised, and then be ready to get an early start for Spring. De-bud your first year trees (keep one flower to try the fruit – if you must!) Keep one male to eight female trees. Pawpaws are heavy feeders. Spray copper based spray or leaf microbes to prevent black spot.

Persimmon: Make sure trees are fully netted. Harvest time for early varieties.

Strawberries: Prepares sites for runners to be planted out at the end of the month. Keep well-watered to form new runners.

Bananas: Fertilise with organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash – 1 kg per stool. Keep up water; bag fruit; and cut off bells.

Citrus: Fruit thinning should be done this month. Leave one fruit every 150mm. Fertilise tree with organic fertiliser containing sulphate of potash, 1 kg for large trees and ½ kg for smaller trees. Keep up sprays of pest oil for leaf miner. Keep up the water.

MARCH

Custard Apples: Fertilize trees – 20 gms of organic fertiliser per sq m to drip line. Harvest every 3 to 7 days. If mealy bug is a problem spray individual fruit with pest oil or wipe on metho and water (30% metho + 70% water).

Figs: Close to end of season.

Lychee: Less watering is required, but don't let the trees dry out. If Erinose mite appears, spray every 10 to 14 days with wettable sulphur from pinhead size new growth to fully open and hardened off.

Low Chill Stone Fruit: Water needs to taper off now as trees begin to defoliate.

Mango: If any anthracnose fungus is visible, spray with a copper based spray every 2 weeks, or with 25 mls leaf microbes and 5 grams wettable sulphur per 1 litre of water.

Passionfruit: The water can be tapered off. Harvest fallen fruit under vines every 3-4 days.

Pawpaw: Plant out new trees. Apply boron now. 1 teaspoon per mature tree. Spray leaf microbes (25 ml leaf microbes per 1 litre of water) if black spot is seen.

Persimmon: Main harvest time. Decline water needs. Apply a little super fine lime and gypsum – 50 gms per sq metre of each.

Strawberries: Plant out new runners. If you want to leave last year's plants, prune only.

Bananas: Give stools a high organic potassium fertilizer – 200 grams per stool (any organic fertilizer that has added sulphate of potash).

Citrus: If any fungal problems arise, spray with pest oil and leaf microbes. Add the pest oil + 15 ml per litre of the leaf microbes.

This will also control the citrus leaf miner and scale.

Pruning Citrus: Citrus trees need little pruning. If over-crowded, thin out after fruiting. Don't thin oranges or grapefruit severely but mandarins can be shortened back to the second or third shoot down the branch. Lemon trees are taller and less compact so keep them to a size easier to handle. Old trees can be cut severely but will take a year or two to recover and bear.

Queensland Planting Guide, BOGI

VEGETABLES

FEBRUARY:

Asian Greens, Beans (French, Snake), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chilli, Choko, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Marrow, Mustard Greens, Onions, Parsnip, Pumpkin, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silverbeet, Sunflower, Sweet Potato, Tomato.

MARCH:

Asian Greens, Beans (French), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Capsicum, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Chilli, Endive, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Onions, Parsnip, Peas, Potato, Radish, Shallots, Silverbeet, Snow Peas, Sweet Potato, Tomato.

HERBS

FEBRUARY

Annual: Amaranth, Basil, Dill, Herb Robert, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Italian parsley Rocket, Giant Red Mustard, Salad Mallow.

Perennials & Bi-Annuals: Catnip, Ceylon Spinach, Chicory, Chilli, Chives, Comfrey, Perennial Coriander, Echinacea, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Licorice, Lovage, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Stevia, French Tarragon, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury.

MARCH

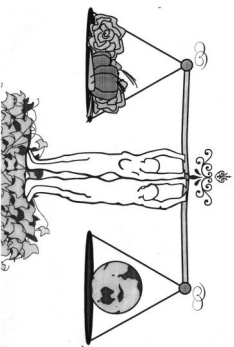
Annual: Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Chervil, Coriander, Dill, Garlic, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Rocket.

Perennials & Bi-Annuals: Catnip, Chives, Perennial Coriander, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Winter Savoury.

Whilst every effort is made to publish accurate information the association (including Editor, Executive Officers and Committee) accepts no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed in this newsletter.

If not claimed in 14 days, please return to:
GCOG, PO Box 210, Mudgeeraba Q 4213

*GOLD COAST ORGANIC
GROWERS Inc.*



NEWSLETTER

Meetings held:
3rd Thursday of the Month

Meeting place:
Cnr Guineas Creek Road
& Coolgardie Street
Elanora, Gold Coast

Next meeting:
Thursday 15th March 2018