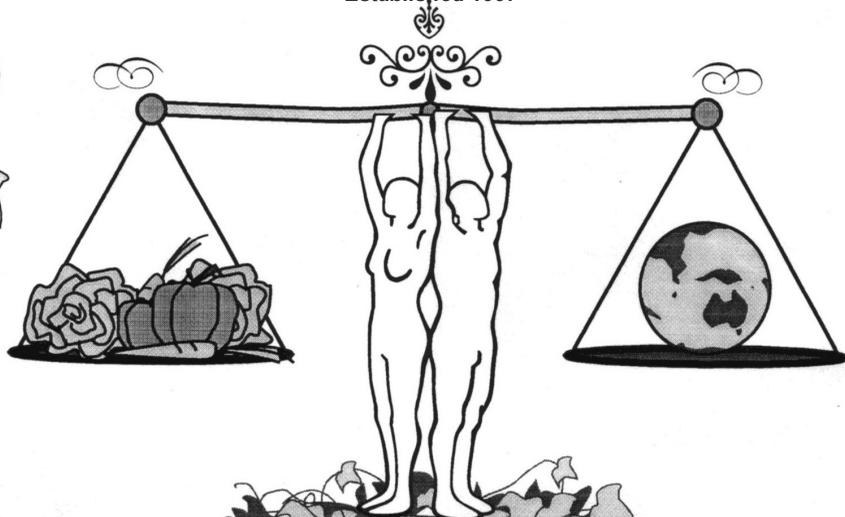


# GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 23 - SEPTEMBER 2019 Issue 9  
GARDENING IN SPRING

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2019

**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 \$2 members, \$5 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 PO Box 210, Mudgeraba Qld 4213, 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:** \$15 an issue, or \$145 per year,

**1/2 page:** \$25 an issue, or \$250 per year,

**full page:** \$40 an issue, or \$400 per year,

**W:** [www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org](http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/gcorganic](http://www.facebook.com/gcorganic)

**2018 –2019 Committee**

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Librarians	Evelyn Douglas
Seed Bank Seed Assistants	Lyn Mansfield Maggie Golightly Bill Smart
Supper Co-ordinator	Paul Roberson, Deb Phillips, Bev Geraghty
Veggie Swap Co-ordinator	Dorothy Coe

**Newsletter Contributions** are welcome. Send in a photo of what's going on in your patch or write an article about something interesting you've learnt recently. **Deadline for contributions is two weeks before the meeting.** Send articles and photos to Leah at [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@gmail.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.

**Overdue:** Barbara Talty (58), Melanie Strang (440)

**September:** Henry Blonner (108), Neil Ross (294), Beth Orme (343)

**October:** John Palmer (357), Evelyn Douglas (383), Doug & Sally Beitz (441), Debbie Casey (442), Corey Bousen & Rena Hofmann (443)



**DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS IS ONE WEEK BEFORE THE MEETING.**

Send your content to  
Leah at:  
[leahbryang@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryang@gmail.com)

## Upcoming Guest Speakers

October 17 - Mark Pritchard 'Permaculture Fundamentals' and Anna MacDonald 'Compost Teas.'

November 21 - John Palmer 'Edible Wild Weeds' (bring specimens from your own garden for identification.)

No meeting in December.

January 16 - Welcome back and Q&A.

February 20 - AGM and Member Talks

March 19 - Kevin Redd 'Fruits to Grow in the Subtropics'

To suggest a speaker please contact Leah Johnston via [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@gmail.com)

## Workshops

**Gardening Lunch** – all welcome  
We meet monthly for lunch and have a chat. 11 am to 2 pm – at a trendy café somewhere (any recommendation welcomed)  
If you would like to know when the next lunch is on email Lyn Mansfield  
[Lynmansfield14@bigpond.com](mailto:Lynmansfield14@bigpond.com)  
Mobile – 0409 645 888

### EdibleScapes

Working bee/workshop 2nd Saturday of each month - 8:30am to 10:30am  
[Edible Landscape gardens Project.](http://ediblescapes.org/)  
<http://ediblescapes.org/>

If you have a free event you would like us to share in our newsletter please let us know about it by sending the details to Leah at: [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@gmail.com)

### View our Newsletters On-Line or Collect at our Meetings:-

[www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/](http://www.goldcoastorganicgrowers.org.au/)

### Thanks to this month's contributors:

Diane Kelly and Leah Johnston.

## August meeting Q&A

by Leah Johnston

Looking at the seed table of the spring varieties of plants we can start on the Gold Coast, Maria gave some tips of how to grow a few things.

Carrots need to be kept moist until they germinate in 16 to 18 days. Plant radishes with them, they will be ready in five weeks and your carrots will keep motoring along. Don't make it any harder for yourself than you need to, you don't need to mix the seeds with sand, just sprinkle them along the row with your fingers. Be sure to go out and water them every day until they germinate, don't forget.

Jill asked how to stop cucumbers getting mildew. Maria advised to plant them ASAP so they will be up before it's too hot. Don't worry about the myth that you can't water in the middle of the day because you might burn the leaves, water between the morning and the middle of the day so the plants will be dry before night hits, to help prevent mildew. If plants do develop mildew Mark suggested spraying the leaves with full fat milk diluted in water, 10 parts water to 1 part milk.

Don't worry so much about the things that love to grow together as in companion planting, worry more about what doesn't want to grow together. Lettuce and cucumber hate to grow together. Other members reported that garlic and strawberries don't like growing together and if tomatoes grow near fig trees the nematodes they attract can kill the fig

**"The biggest tip I can give you is don't forget to write what seeds you're saving on the label, and the month and year you packed it. You'll think you'll remember it but you won't remember anything."**

**- Maria Roberson**

## August Speaker Recap Maria Roberson 'Seed Saving Masterclass'

by Leah Johnston



Our speaker at the August meeting was our own President, Maria Roberson, sharing her knowledge and experience around the topic of seed saving.

I brought my laptop along to the meeting so I could take as many notes as possible as I know many of us (including me) will want to refer back to this information again.

Maria held up *The Seed Savers Handbook* by Michelle and Jude Fenton, who started the Seed Savers Network. It is a great resource for gardeners.

Maria explained the differences between hybrid, open pollinated and genetically modified seeds.

### Hybrid seeds

"A plant that has been derived from two different varieties of the same plant is called a hybrid. So you might have a bright orange, absolutely delicious tomato, but it doesn't grow very well. The fruit is spectacular, though, and you want to keep it. You might have another one, a cherry tomato, which grows in cracks in concrete, it is so hardy. So you could combine the hardness of the cherry tomato plant and the flavour of the orange tomato. By cross pollinating the two

plants and hopefully they can produce a hybrid plant that has the best of both. This happens in nature too. This would be called F1 on a packet. When you plant it you know you'll get a true to seed plant. If you save the seeds from this though you would then get a F2, which is very unreliable. It could look like either parent plant or a weird mixture. So that's why you don't save the seeds of a hybrid plant, it's not reliable, it reverts back to its genetics.

"If you have ever had a rockmelon or something come up in your veggie patch that wasn't quite right, it could be from a hybrid seed from a fruit you bought at the shop then put the seeds into your compost. Now it's okay and this happens in nature too but it's usually not a great or very tasty fruit that you'll get," Maria said.

### **Open pollinated seeds**

"This is a stock standard plant that hasn't been fiddled with at all. All of our plants in our seed bank that we sell at the meetings are open pollinated. I know when I want to save the seeds from these and replant them every year it will produce the same reliable plant," Maria said.

### **Genetically engineered seeds**

"Genetic engineering can't be done by you and me. We can make a hybrid by cross pollinating in our veggie patches, but genetic engineering is different, it's taking some genes from not just another variety but from something different altogether. Like creating tomato plants that feature a gene from a salmon so they would be more cold tolerant. Genetic engineering was sold to us as having the ability to develop crops that would grow in places where they couldn't be grown before. Of course that didn't really happen, instead they made crops that were more tolerant to pesticides, fungicides and herbicides," Maria said.

**"We've kind of lost the art of saving seeds."**

**- Maria Roberson**

Danny asked about 'Heirloom seeds' and Maria replied that it is a bit of a marketing term and it generally means it is a variety that has been around for a long time.

### **Saving seeds**

Maria explained that plants can be divided into two groups: those with separate male and female flowers. She called these promiscuous as they readily cross pollinate with other plants in the same family with help from the bees and other pollinators or pollen carried on the wind. A Jap pumpkin and a butternut can cross and make Japnuts. You can grow both at the same time if you don't want to save the seeds to grow next year. Other plants in this category include pumpkins, squash, zucchinis, cucumbers and melons.

If you want to save true seeds you can make up some cages made from screen doors, or bag them but Maria thinks the best way to keep them true to type without crossing is the time barrier. Growing the plants in different areas of your garden isn't a reliable way to prevent cross-pollination since bees can carry pollen to different plants up to four kilometres away. Maria's preferred method of stopping cross-pollination from occurring is time. Planting the different varieties at staggered intervals will mean they aren't flowering at the same time so won't cross pollinate. An easy way to do this is to choose an early variety, a mid variety and a late variety of the food you want to grow. On corn plants the silk is the male part and the husk is the female part. As they are pollinated by the wind so you grow them in blocks so they can pollinate more easily. To avoid cross pollination they need to be grown a kilometre apart, or by planting the different varieties at different times so they won't flower at the same time.

Another group of plants have flowers where the male and female parts are within the same flower so close together that they don't need to be pollinated by a bee or the wind as they can easily self-pollinate. For example if you planted a red pioneer bean next to a snakebean, they wouldn't cross. So you can easily save these seeds and be confident you'll be saving a true to type seed. Other plants which are unlikely to cross pollinate

include peas, tomatoes, lettuce and okra.

It's important to think about which category your plants fall into when you're planning to save the seeds. When you're growing to save seeds let your plants grow well past the size they are good for eating so they are overly ripe.

"It's all experimental,"  
- Maria Roberson.

Maria said that carrots and celery need to grow for two years before they will set seed properly. Ours in the sub tropics bolt (go to seed) in the first year, so you don't really want to save the seeds from that because it will encourage your next plants to bolt very quickly. The carrot and celery seeds we sell at the club are bought from down south.

Rachel asked how many plants do you need to save the seeds from to have genetic diversity and a viable source of seed? Maria replied: "One lettuce plant will yield up to 30,000 seeds. Individual plants will set more seeds if you let a few of them go to seed, rather than just one. You wouldn't save the seed from the one that bolts to seed first as you would be perpetuating that in the next crop. So you would save the one that is the best looking or goes to seed last. You pick the best to save from. Choose the most desirable traits from your plants to be passed on to the next generation.

"If growing tomatoes you will choose based on the truss looking how you want it, lots of fruit on each plant, the size being good. If it's something like zucchinis save the seeds from the plant that doesn't suffer from powdery mildew. Always save from your strongest, healthiest, best tasting plants," Maria said.

When it comes to saving pea seeds Maria advised to save the seeds based on what you're looking for.

"If you're looking for peas that set fruit early you would save the first pods formed. If you are looking for mould resistance then save

pods later. I would save from the first, the middle and the last, from the plant that produces a lot. Let the pods dry on the bush, unless the rain is bucketing down for two weeks," she said.

Rosellas are quite nice and easy; they don't cross pollinate with anything. Just let them grow past the best of the eating stage. For pumpkins let them be ripe and mature, bring them inside and let them mature for four weeks.

### Seed storage tips

Packing things away when they are too wet will ruin them. Make sure they are very dry by drying them in a dark place with airflow. For long-term storage Maria likes to keep them in little brown glass bottles left over from vitamins or face cream. The humidity and heat will start to hurt them over time so you can keep them in the fridge. Maggie said she adds a silica packet to her jars to absorb any moisture.

Rather than storing seeds long term Maria prefers to keep things growing, get it in the ground and keep growing it year after year. Seeds have varying longevity with small seeds lasting less time than big seeds. Store seeds in the coolest room of the house; fluctuating temperatures will affect the seeds' viability, so it is not recommended to store them in the shed. You can test large seeds (beans, corn and peas) with your teeth, just try to bite down on it and if it has still got give it's not dry enough. But be careful not to break your teeth!

Maria uses metal sieves to help sort her seeds from the flower cases. Some seeds, like loofah seeds, have a fine paper case on them and need a 'winnowing' treatment to get it off: swirl them around in a large bowl on a windy day or blow on them to get the chaffy parts off the seeds. You want to get rid of that stuff as it can harbour little insects which will harm your seeds.

When saving corn seeds just remove the silks and open the husk, allow the cob to dry in the shade then rub the kernels off with

your fingers.

To prepare tomato seeds squeeze them out into a jar, add a spoonful of water if there's not enough liquid in the jar and let them ferment. You want a scum on the top, and once that forms after about three days in warm weather or up to a week in cooler weather, tip them into the sieve over the sink and rub under fresh water to wash the goop that's around the seeds off. Then spread them out onto butchers' paper to let them dry. Move them around every few hours so they don't get stuck, but don't let it go too scummy because it really stinks.

Pumpkins should be picked when ripe and then brought inside for four weeks to ripen further before harvesting and drying the seeds to store.

Members asked about growing fruit trees from seed. Maria said don't grow any that need grafting.

Pawpaw and passionfruit seeds grow better when planted fresh rather than dried. Tamarillo, loquats and Brazilian cherry can all grow well from seed.

Saving seeds from your own garden could perform better for you every year you plant them and grow them as they are accustomed to the micro climate of your patch. Buying seeds that were grown locally should grow better for you than those grown in a different climate. Some of our seeds we sell at the meetings are from local members, you can see on the front of the packets where the seeds were sourced from be it a member's organic garden, organic seeds or non-hybrid seeds. If anyone is feeling inspired to save seeds you can contribute them to the club and other members can grow them and we can all strive for healthier, stronger, tastier plants that are accustomed to growing in our local area.



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## Did you know...? Facts and advice on plants, wildlife and other things

by Diane Kelly

*Did you know that eggplants are ready to harvest any time from when the fruit starts to form up to when growing to their full size?* They should have a plump, shiny appearance – don't wait until they lose their shine and have become hard, because that's when the fruit becomes seedy, bitter and tough. Never pull the fruit off the plant, but rather cut the fruit stems with a sharp pair of secateurs to avoid damage to the fruit and bush.

*Did you know that there are more than 1,100 species of ants in Australia?* Those most encountered in and around the garden include the sugar ant, meat ant, green ant and bull ant. To deter ants, plant tansy, rue or wormwood.

*Did you know the Dodder vine (*Cuscuta spp.*) is a weed and must be controlled?* Once this parasitic vine has attached to a plant, its roots die and it takes all the water and nutrients it requires from the host. Slowly it weakens the host and may eventually kill it. While short-lived, it seeds prolifically. Remove every piece of vine, clear the ground and mulch to 15cm deep. In badly affected beds, leave the ground fallow for one season to prevent it from spreading.



**Dodder vine – easily recognisable**

*Do you know the difference between Evergreen and Deciduous?* Trees and shrubs are broadly divided into two groups, based on whether a plant loses its leaves completely before new leaves are formed (deciduous) or if they are gradually replaced so that the plant is never bare (evergreen).

*Did you know that rats dislike the smell of mint?* So if you have a problem with them, try growing some mint near your poultry run or compost heap to deter them.

*Do you know the best time to cut lavender for drying?* To dry lavender, pick it when the flowers show colour but before they are fully open. Cut off the full length of the flower stalks, tie them together in small bunches, and hang them upside down in a cool, airy place to dry.

*Do you know which herbs won't grow together?* In general, plants that have the same growing requirements can be planted together. An exception in herbs is fennel: it is "allelopathic" and should be grown alone. There are basically two kinds of herbs: those that need a lot of moisture and those that don't, so group each type and they will grow happily together. Herbs that enjoy moisture-rich soil include basil, coriander, tarragon and parsley, while herbs that don't need as much water (or "Mediterranean herbs") include oregano, sage, rosemary, thyme, bay, marjoram and lavender.

... and in case you don't know what "allelopathic" means, it is the inhibition of growth in one species of plants by chemicals produced by another species.

*Did you know that an ear of corn averages 800 kernels in 16 rows?* And do you know that popcorn is a variety of corn with seeds that contain air bubbles, causing the corn to pop when it is heated. Varieties of field corn – or maize – are drier and starchier than sweet corn and are generally used for flour or meal.

*Did you know that commercial choko plantations in Australia yield up to 50,000 kgs of fruit per hectare?* Commercially the fruit is used as an apple substitute in pies, frozen desserts and tinned fruit.

*Do you know what a “walking stick cabbage” is? “Brassica oleracea longata” may not be the tastiest cabbage variety available, but it is certainly the tallest. The stems, which grow up to two metres tall, can be dried and used as walking sticks!*

*Did you know that there is a 7<sup>th</sup> century Irish law text on bee-keeping called the “Bechbretha”? One of its rulings is that a bee taking nectar from a neighbour’s flowers is guilty of grazing trespass. After three years, the neighbor had to be given a swam as payment, thus ensuring that bees became a common asset. P.S. One of the reasons why bees were so important is that bees wax (for making candles) was a highly-prized commodity.*



### **“The Trespasser”**

*Did you know that the bay tree, or *Laurus nobilis*, (bay laurel) was the plant the Romans used in ancient days to crown visitors and successful students? Its leaves were fashioned into a wreath, which gives us the word “baccalaureate” (literally “laurel berry”), or bachelor, which is still applied to the first degree taken in university today.*

*Did you know that some plants, such as acacias and proteas, use ants to disperse their seeds? The seeds, which have a food source attached, are carried away by the ants, who eat the food and then leave the seeds to germinate.*

*Do you know how to test the viability of seeds? If you are using older seeds that you’ve had for a while, or seeds given to you by a friend or seed swapper, you can test them for viability before you plant. Sprinkle some of the seeds you want to test over some moist paper towel or newspaper. Roll the paper up in a long cigar shape and fold in the ends. Keep the cigar moist for seven to ten days and then check to see if any of the*

*seeds have germinated. If they have, the seeds are fine to use.*

*Did you know that chickens normally live between six and eight years? The oldest chicken (according to the Guinness Book of Records) lived until the ripe old age of 16!*

*Do you know the best way to freeze herbs? Herbs can be frozen, but the process depends upon the herb, and what you will be doing with it after it’s frozen. Tough-stemmed herbs like basil, tarragon and sage should have their leaves removed prior to freezing. Just pack the clean leaves into plastic bags or into freezer containers and place them in the freezer. Basil should be blanched before freezing, or it will turn black. Simply put basil leaves into a strainer and pour boiling water over them. Drain and freeze in the size portions you think you’ll need. Other herbs, such as dill or parsley, will freeze well if they’re separated into sprigs and frozen individually, then packed into one large container.*

*You can also freeze chopped herbs in ice cube trays. Place a teaspoon of herb in each section, and then fill with water. Once they’re frozen, the herb cubes can be removed and stored in plastic freezer bags in the freezer. These are great for popping into winter soups and sauces. They also add a depth of flavour to pasta dishes, casseroles and omelets.*



### **Freeze today for flavour tomorrow**

*Did you know that stingless bees protect themselves by constructing a strong nest wall and entrance tube, and having guard bees that bite and daub resin on intruders?*

## A Rose by any other Name

by Diane Kelly

When I was growing up, our backyard in suburban Melbourne was primarily dedicated to growing vegetables, but my dad always had a bed of roses growing to add colour and perfume to the garden.



*Suttor's Gold – stunning colours!*

My dad was a fine gardener, and after he died, my mum's dream was to have a garden as good as his. She also wanted to keep growing the roses that dad had planted, and in particular his favourite which was called "Suttor's Gold". This had beautiful golden-pink blooms, and it was strange – dad and I could smell the perfume, but mum could not.

The family interest in roses has continued on to the next generation, and although growing them in Queensland is not as easy because of the humidity, there is one rose that has become my favourite.

The "Princess de Monaco Rose" was created in 1981 by Marie-Louise Meiland and is also known as the "Grace Kelly rose". This rose is a hybrid tea rose, and it flowers in delicate shades of cream and pink – the blooms have been described as "pink with gold at its heart". The colours can vary from white to a deep pink depending on the soil in which it is planted.

This rose grows happily in a large container (don't forget to put some pebbles in the bottom of the pot to aid drainage), and is quite disease free – it may attract a bit of black spot in the summer humidity, but just remove the affected leaves and the black spot should not spread. (Remember to wrap the affected leaves in paper and place them in the bin.) My plants had a little bit of black spot, but apart from that, the only problem was the wallabies – they enjoy eating tender, young rose leaves!

The blooms are very fragrant and grow about four inches across. They are single-stemmed and are ideal as cut flowers for a vase. As a shrub rose it will grow to about a metre high, and as a climber it will reach 2 metres or more. The leaves are a dark, glossy green, and the plant generally is quite hardy. It prefers the water kept up to it, as long as it's well drained - on a slope is great for this rose - and of course some mulch and some organic, slow release fertilizer before it flowers. This will give you the best blooms. And dead heading will encourage more and more blooms. The plants will keep growing for up to fifteen years.

I've recently bought another "Princess de Monaco" rose bush and it is just starting to bud - I am sure the anticipation of the blooms will be well worth the wait.



*A rose "fit for a Princess"*

## A quote from Albert Einstein ... and Making Compost

by Diane Kelly

Albert Einstein once said “In theory, theory and practice are the same. In practice, they are not.”

Now this concept does actually have something to do with making compost – because I’ve learnt that you can’t successfully make compost unless you understand a little bit about how the process works – you do need a bit of theory as well as the practice! So I have been very grateful to my friend who lent me a book that goes through the A-Z of compost, and explains what the various elements actually do.

Here are ten components of compost and a bit about each:

1. **Elements:** There are sixteen elements present within all vegetable matter, and they divide into three groups:

a. Essential elements – carbon, oxygen and hydrogen.

b. Major elements – these include nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus, calcium, magnesium and sulphur.

c. Trace elements – chlorine, iron, manganese, zinc, copper and boron.

Deficiencies in any of these elements show up in developing plants, so they need to be present in the soil or compost that are feeding your plants.

2. **Bacteria:** These break down plant and animal residues in the compost, thereby releasing carbon dioxide which plants absorb as gaseous vapors. Bacteria also convert organic nitrogen into ammonia and finally nitrates, which plants can then absorb through water.

3. **Boron:** Boron plays a vital role in flower and fruiting. A boron deficiency reduces the

intake of other nutrient elements by the plants, which then become degenerate.

4. **Calcium:** This element ensures plant maturity, high seed production and the intake of other essential elements.

5. **Carbon and Carbon Dioxide:** Carbon atoms are the cornerstones of all molecules within plants. They form carbohydrates and the fibrous substance called cellulose. Carbon contributes to about 44% of dry plant material and is absorbed by plants in the gaseous form, carbon dioxide. The decomposition of organic matter by the action of micro-organisms generates carbon dioxide. The carbon dioxide in turn feeds bacterial conversion of cellulose into glucose, which again produces carbon dioxide. When carbon dioxide is incorporated in water, it forms a weak acid – and this acid dissolves soil-borne nutrients from humus, clay and mineral grains, making them ready for absorption by plants.

6. **Enzymes:** Without enzymes, plants could not grow, seed or reproduce; vegetable matter could not decompose; and worms could not collect and concentrate nutrients in their casts. Enzymes help activate photosynthesis and oxygen transfer within the plant.

7. **Iron:** Iron gives leaves and grasses their depth of colour – plants lacking iron tend to be yellow. Iron carries oxygen to the leaves of plants for the synthesis of chlorophyll, the substance that gives plants their green colour.



**8. Magnesium:** This element is critical for plant development. It assists in water regulation, absorption of nitrogen, phosphorus and sulphur, and also helps in the formation of proteins and other biochemical complexes. Ground dolomite rock rectifies a magnesium deficiency.

**9. Micro-organisms:** These include algae, bacteria, fungi, protozoa and yeasts, and their life and work create and maintain soil in a way that sustains plants. Micro-organisms assist in making elements acceptable for plant intake. They concentrate minerals and link them with organic compounds to form chelates (which are water soluble, and so are readily converted into plant tissue).

**10. Potassium:** Potassium is a major plant nutrient and is involved in complex biochemical interactions such as starch, sugar and protein formation, and in photosynthesis. It increases root growth, strengthens stems, assists in setting fruit, and adds to the brilliance of flower colour.

Of course there are many other factors involved in the making of good compost – things such as air, moisture, acidity and alkalinity, the carbon/nitrogen balance, the awareness of contaminants, time and temperature. But by reading “The Compost Book” (written by David & Yvonne Taylor) it has shown me that a successful compost heap needs a wide variety of materials – as it says on page 10 - “a balanced diet is the key to good compost”.

So I've read the theory and am now looking forward to practicing making good compost!

*Spring is Nature's Way of Saying,*

**‘Let's Party!’**



## The Joy of Growing Your Own Vegetables

by Diane Kelly

The weather grew warmer in the last few weeks of winter, and now that spring has arrived, the vegetables in my garden look as though they are enjoying life!

I planted out my 1.6m x 6.0m timber-framed garden bed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June. I had put down layers of cardboard, horse and cow manure, a lower layer of sugar cane, a layer of stump grindings from a silky oak tree that we had to cut down, and then an upper layer of lucerne hay. In the planting holes I made for the seedlings I put a couple of handfuls of compost, and then topped that up with soil from the mound that the brush turkey had made last year (now rich soil that is filled with worms).

I planted out kale (red and green), silver beet, broccoli, cauliflower, beans, buttercrunch lettuces, cabbages and snow peas. Around the brassica seedlings I put crushed eggshells, and these have proven to be a good deterrent to grubs. Since that time I've also added in some parsley plants, shallots, nasturtiums, tomatoes and plenty of Cos lettuce for green smoothies.



**Kales, silver beet, broccoli & cauliflowers**

We picked the first lettuce for lunch on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July, and since that time have enjoyed many salads, stir fries with plenty of vegies, and healthy drinks. All the plants have grown well, and the snow peas have been particu-

larly sweet and crunchy this year. The worms have come to do their work, and there have been very few pests causing problems.

There is not much that is better than going out in the early morning to pick vegetables greens to make into a salad or a green smoothie for lunch – in fact, growing your own vegetables truly is a joy!



***Cos lettuce, cabbages, nasturtiums and the snow peas flowering and fruiting***



***The "Composta" is also doing well this spring***



***Vegies from the garden for tea 3.9.19 – with tomatoes added for colour***



***Check out Jill's BioDynamic self-sown frilly pink lettuce! Wow what a beauty!***

***We would love to see what more of our members are growing in their gardens. Please send photos of your proudest produce to [leahbryan9@gmail.com](mailto:leahbryan9@gmail.com)***

## FRUIT TREES

### SEPTEMBER

**Custard Apple:** Leaf loss should occur this month. Low irrigation. Mulch trees. This month is the best time to prune custard apples. 1/3 of old wood needs to be taken off.

**Figs:** Pruning can be carried out. Be very vigorous. 1/3 can be cut off. Figs are only produced on new wood of the new season's growth. Give trees a good feed of organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash. Mulch well.

**Lychee:** Increase irrigation. Flowering should start this month. Fertilise trees with an organic fertiliser with potassium sulphate. Give mature trees 1 kg and small trees ½ kg.

**Low chill stone fruit:** Carry out final thinning. Stone hardening will occur this month. Continue with high irrigation. Prune out water shoots and dense foliage for better sized fruits. Use fruit fly control programs, for example netting or an attractant method.

**Mango:** Don't let trees dry out. Once flowering occurs spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose, if visible.

**Passionfruit:** Vines will start to grow this month. Apply a little organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash and mulch vines at least 2 to 3 metres out from the base. 1kg for large vines and ½ kg for smaller vines.

**Pawpaw:** Spray with wettable sulphur in the evenings for spider mite.

**Persimmon:** Flowering will start in early varieties. Mulch trees. Low irrigation.

**Strawberries:** Apply small amount of organic fertilizer with sulphate of potash. Keep up irrigation. Pick fruit when fully ripe.

**Bananas:** Don't let stools dry out. Keep fruit covered and cut off bells.

**Citrus:** Flowering will occur this month. Increase irrigation. Fertilise tree with organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1kg for large trees and ½ kg for smaller trees.

### OCTOBER

**Custard Apple:** Increase irrigation. Mulch trees. Apply 2g boron/sqm.

**Figs:** Pruning should be done. Figs only produce on new wood or new season's growth. Mulch well.

**Lychee:** Peak water needs. Mulch. Apply gypsum 20gms/sqm.

**Low chill stone fruit:** Spring prune new growth. Continue with high irrigation. Prune out water shoots and dense foliage for better size fruit. Use fruit fly control programs, for example netting or an attractant method.

**Mango:** Peak water needs. Apply organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, 1kg for larger trees and 1/2kg for smaller trees. Spray with copper based spray or leaf microbes for anthracnose per fortnight.

**Passion-fruit:** Plant out new vines. Pruning carried out this month. All dead parts to go. Keep up the water.

**Paw-paw:** Increase irrigation. Apply 20 gms per sq m of organic fertiliser.

**Strawberries:** Apply small amount of organic fertiliser with sulphate of potash, about 10g / plant. Keep up with fish emulsion or kelp spray weekly.

**Bananas:** Have one plant with fruit on, one half grown and one sucker. Discard all others. De-sucker plants by cutting down to centre with a sharp knife taking the centre out and add 1teaspoon of kerosene in the well.

**Citrus:** Keep up the water. Add lime or gypsum. Mature trees 1/2kg, 1/4kg for small trees.

*Brisbane Organic Growers Handbook*

## VEGETABLES

### SEPTEMBER

Artichoke, Asian greens, Asparagus, Beans (French), Beetroots, Capsicum, Carrot, Celeriac, Chilli, Choko, Cucumber, Eggplant, Gourd, Kale, Leeks, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, Melons, Mustard Greens, Okra, Peanut, Pumpkin, Radish, Rosella, Shallots, Silverbeet, Squash, Sunflower, Sweet corn, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Zucchini.

### OCTOBER

Artichoke, Asian Greens, Asparagus, Beans (French), Beetroot, Capsicum, Carrot, Celeriac, Chilli, Choko, Cucumber, Eggplant, Gourd, Kale, Lettuce, Luffa, Marrow, Melons, Mustard Greens, Okra, Peanut, Pumpkin, Radish, Rosella, Shallots, Squash, Sunflower, Sweet Corn, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Zucchini.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO  
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Enquiries directly to  
[staceypanozzo@gmail.com](mailto:staceypanozzo@gmail.com)

## HERBS

### SEPTEMBER

**Annual:** Basil, Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Coriander, Dill, Herb Robert, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Giant Red Mustard, Mustard Lettuce, Nasturtium, Rocket.

**Perennials & Bi-Annals:** 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, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury.

### OCTOBER

**Annual:** Basil, Borage, Calendula, Dill, Herb Robert, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Giant Red Mustard, Mustard Lettuce, Nasturtium, Rocket.

**Perennials & Bi-Annals:** 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, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury.

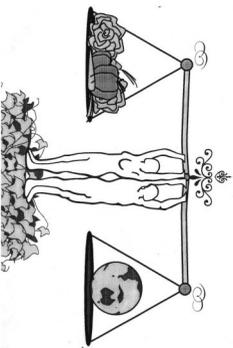
*Queensland Planting Guide  
Brisbane Organic Growers*

**Play in the dirt.  
Because life is too  
short to always have  
clean fingernails.**

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  
Doors open at 7pm, meetings  
start at 7.30pm and run  
until approximately 9.30pm

**Meeting place:**

Cnr Guineas Creek Road  
& Coolgardie Street  
Elanora, Gold Coast

**Next meeting:**

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2019