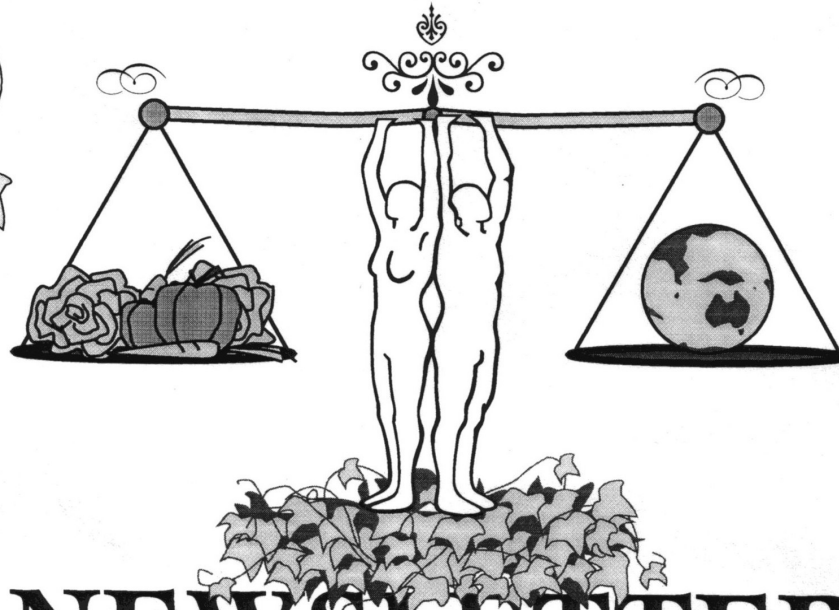


GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.



NEWSLETTER

Volume 13 April 2010 Issue 4

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 20 May

THE AIMS OF G.C.O.G. Inc.

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 send cheques (payable to GCOG) to Diane Kelly - or just pay at the door.

Seed Bank: \$1.50 ea.

Members Market Corner: Please bring plants, books and produce you wish to sell.

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

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

Advertising: \$10 an issue, or \$100 for 11 issues (1 year).

Newsletter: contributions welcome by post or email (preferred).

Please send to: webprint@onthenet.com.au
Please put [GCOG] in email 'subject' box.

2010 Committee

<i>President</i>	Maria Roberson (07) 5598 6609 405 Piggabeen Rd, Currumbin Q 4223
<i>Vice President</i>	Ross Davis (07) 599 7576
<i>Treasurer</i>	Diane Kelly (07) 5522 7444
<i>Secretary</i>	Karen Hart (07) 55277484
<i>Membership</i> <i>Membership Asst</i>	Diane Kelly Roger Behrendorff
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Dorothy Coe (07) 5533 9905 PO BOX 446, Palm Beach QLD 4221
<i>Newsletter Assistant</i>	Diane Kelly
<i>Publicity</i>	Steve Dalton 0414 464 564
<i>Advertising</i>	Tali Filip 0402 438 563
<i>Guest Speaker</i>	Lise Racine
<i>Trip Co-ordinator</i>	Maria Roberson 0402 438 563
<i>Librarian</i> <i>Library Assistant</i>	Heather Ryan (07) 55344047 Pauline Behrendorff
<i>Seed Bank</i>	Peter Seymour-Smith (07) 55965678
<i>Seed Bank Assistant</i>	Graham Boyle

“Food is meant to feed us.”

**Thanks to other contributors: Ross Davis,
Dorothy & Chris Winton, Maria Roberson**



Notice Board

Membership Renewals

Over-due: Lindy Davidson, Dominic Farnworth, Peter Aubort, Joshua Graham, Chantel Geldenhuys, Arthur & Robyn Buckley, Rodney Boscoe, Cathy Smith, Amanda Quennell, Christine Whayman, Emma Glasson, Mark Raynham, Barbara Morgan, Julie Baythorpe, Judy McCracken, Jerry Rogers, Deborah Jones

March: Jannette Janssen, Regina Lacgalvs, Inge Light, Leone Freney

April: Barbara Talty, Margaret Reichelt, Jude Lai, Kym O'Connell, Gerard McCormick, Marco & Kathleen Berton, Helen Wainwright, David Wyatt, Steve Dalton

May: Chris Larkin, Clive Canning, Karen Auchere, Mary Frawley, Bruce Kelly, Heather Ryan, Leanne Cane

Upcoming Outings

A trip to Jude Lay's was suggested for either May 2nd or 16th – Date TBC
Thomas Organic Farm, Murwillumbah, in June — Date TBC

Sustainable Gardening Workshops By Gold Coast City Council

Time: 10am to noon

Where and When:

17th April—Robina Library, Robina Town Centre Drive, Robina

22nd May—Nerang Bicentennial Community Centre, Southport-Nerang Rd, Nerang

26th June—Runaway Bay Library, Lae Drive, Runaway Bay

NaturallyGC Program

Gold Coast City Council's NaturallyGC Program has some great activities running throughout the year, many of them of interest to organic gardeners.

Remember: Bookings are essential. Places are strictly limited and the program is not able to accommodate people who turn up on the day. Call (07) **5581 1521** for information and/or to book your spot.

Seed Collection and Propagation

When: Saturday 17 April
Where: Coombabah
Time: 9am to 1pm

Create a Native Garden

When: Saturday 8 May
Where: Burleigh Heads
Time: 9am to 12pm

Reptile Awareness

When: Saturday 29 May
Where: Carrara
Time: 10am to 12pm

Wildcare on the Gold Coast

When: Saturday 26 June
Where: Advancetown
Time: 9.30am to 12.30pm



Miami Organic Farmers Market

Where: Miami State High School
2137-2205 Gold Coast Highway, Miami
When: Every Sunday, 6am to 11am
Contact: David Whyte
Telephone: (07) 3358 6309 or 1300 668 603
Email: info@gcorganicmarket.com

**To cultivate one's garden is the
politics of the humble man.**
(Chinese Proverb)



Uki Garden Club

Friendship Day on Sunday 3 May 2010 at the Uki Hall, Main St, Uki.
9.30am (registration), 10am start to 2pm

Our theme is Sustainable Gardening

Guest Speakers: Tash Morton on Food Miles
Dave Forrest on Sustainability

Each club is invited to set up a small display table of produce and anything else relating to your club. (Tables will be provided.)

Entry \$12 includes morning tea and lunch.
More information: Fran O'Hara 0425328574.



SEASONS ON THE MOUNTAIN

Tamborine Mountain Open Gardens

Introducing: New Format—Three seasons

Autumn: Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th May
Winter: Saturday 7th & Sunday 8th August
Spring: Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd October

www.tmbotanicgardens.org.au



The annual **Qld Home Garden Expo** runs for three days, Friday July 9 to Sunday July 11 at the Nambour Showgrounds, Nambour.

Highlights—Six live stages hosting lectures, demos and workshops; plant exhibitors with nearly 40,000 plants for sale daily; **Giant Kitchen Garden featuring permaculture and organic gardening**, landscape display gardens, major Floral Art competitions, a special kids' at play area and large displays from Queensland's Garden Clubs and Flora Societies.



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RECIPES

Pea and Lettuce Soup

INGREDIENTS:

500 g peas
1 big lettuce, any kind, chopped
6 small potatoes, cut in small cubes
4 cloves garlic, crushed
2 medium onions, chopped
2 chillies, chopped
4 cups vegetable stock

METHOD:

In a medium pot, fry chillies, garlic and onions until soft. Add all other ingredients and simmer gently until everything is cooked (about 1/2 hour).
Cool and blend.
Season as desired.

Tomato, Chilli and Coriander Jam

If you want to tone down the bite, reduce the quantity of chillies, cumin and mustard seeds.

INGREDIENTS:

- * 2kg ripe roma tomatoes or 3kg cherry tomatoes
- * $\frac{2}{3}$ cup Olive Oil
- * 10 cloves garlic, peeled
- * 1 clove of grated fresh ginger
- * 10 small fresh red chillies, stems removed (or 10 pinches of dried, ground chillies)
- * 2 tablespoons cumin seeds
- * 2 tablespoons black mustard seeds
- * $\frac{3}{4}$ cup red wine vinegar
- * $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nam pla (Thai fish sauce)
- * 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups palm sugar, chopped
- * 1 tablespoon ground turmeric (or two tablespoons finely grated if fresh from the garden)
- * $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fresh coriander leaves and roots (you can substitute leaves of perennial coriander if necessary)

METHOD:

Rub tomatoes with olive oil. Place in a roasting pan and cook in a moderate oven for about 30 minutes or until soft but not coloured.

Process garlic, ginger, chillies, cumin and mustard seeds in a food processor until chopped and well combined. Transfer mixture to a large heavy-based pan, add tomatoes (remove skins), vinegar, nam pla, sugar and turmeric. Simmer for about 2 hours or until thick and jammy. Process in batches until combined but still textured. Return to heat for 5 minutes or until hot; stir in coriander.

Spoon into hot sterilized jars. Seal while hot. Makes about 6 cups (1½ litres)
Store in cool dry place for up to 6 months. Once opened, refrigerate.

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Ross' Patch

Organic Garlic

Now is the time to plant. Definitely no later. I use sugar cane mulch over my garlic bed. Mulch must be put on as soon as the tips of the garlic shoots (just the tip) poke through the ground.

Spread a good layer of good blood and bone (I use "Rich Grow") because it has all the trace element minerals in it, including "sulphate of potash".



Once you have spread the BB over the garden bed, simply spread your sugar cane mulch over the bed and water it in. It sure saves a lot of weeding.

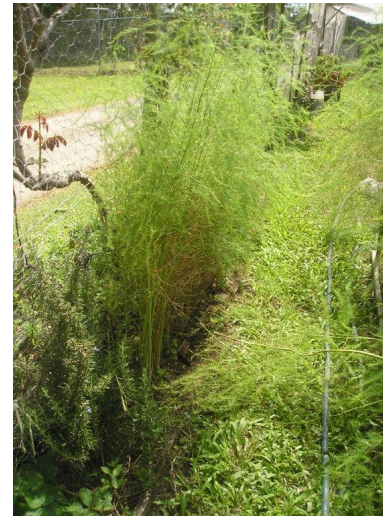


Organic Asparagus

Growing asparagus is for twenty years. So some time spent in preparing the ground is very important. First you need to consider the shade of the ferns. These will grow up to five feet tall.

Now you need to make sure that the soil is able to drain. A sandy soil is best but if you have a clay type soil - it could be worth adding a half a cubic meter of sand to the ground, remember this is a twenty year project.

I have not checked, but asparagus is from the bamboo family. Is it best to buy two year old plants. They cost a bit more but it is worth the extra. I have planted mine about 18 inches apart. You need at least ten plants to get a good feed each time.



The one thing to remember is that this plant needs to establish itself before you pick it, harvest only the odd spears in the first year.

You need to get it to put down a good rooting system, the plant clumps like bamboo. In year 4 you can harvest for the first 8 weeks. By then you will have had enough of asparagus.

I always Mulch my bed with a good home made compost and aged straw. The asparagus will push its way through the straw. Have fun.

Last Wednesday morning 24th I sowed cabbage seed into these trays. On Wednesday they were too dry. So I put two layers of news paper over the trays and watered them. Thursday I watered the paper. On Friday Morning I thought that I had better look under the news paper. Here was EVERY seed up trying to get through the paper,

Removed all the paper and watered the seed trays. See the resulting pictures.

Why Sulphate of Potash is Important

Sulphate of Potash is so important to the health of your plants. It helps produce colour and fruit in your garden. It also helps make your plants harder to the cold weather that we must surly get soon.

This picture show that these tomatoes have just about the correct amount of potash. The fruiting trusses should be no more that 8 inches apart. If they are greater than that the chances are that you have too much nitrogen in your soil. I liberal spreading of Potash will change that in about 2 weeks. These flowers are about 4 inch apart now, but will grow out to around 8 inches by the time fruit has set.



The Busy Hothouse

I can just hear you saying why build a hot house?

I have always wanted a hot house because during the summer rains the Tomatoes get a hiding. Tomatoes do not like to be watered on the tops. Generally an irrigation ditch along in front of your growing tomatoes is the best way to water them. I flood the ditch once a day most days. You have to make a judgment as to whether they are too wet or dry. In a hot house you can control the moisture in the soil.

I use my hot house for all sorts of things. I start my seedling in there this time of the year .



Raising Seedlings

It is important to make sure that seeds have just the right amount of moisture and that at the critical starting stage the seed does not dry out.

This last week I noticed the seed beds were drying out too quickly. I decided to put two layers of news paper over each tray. I have trouble believing this but it is correct, I keep records in the computer.

HAPPY GARDENING — Ross Davis

Chris and Dorothy's Veggie Garden

I was hoping to do BEFORE and AFTER shots but Chris was very keen to get stuck in quick and he chopped down the trees before I took the pics, so these photos are taken "after" the trees where chopped down but before we got stuck into the real work.



Turning the hill into flat land

First we hired a skid steer to turn the sloping hill into flat land. The land area is made up of clay, and big heavy rocks which "I" had to move while he was sitting back in his digger so as you can see I did all the hard work!



Spreading Dolomite to breakdown clay soil

To make life easy we hired some wwoofers on a few occasions. They helped build the retaining walls, paths, drainage, create steps between the two levels, put up the fences, dug a huge hole for the water tank and prepared and landscaped the veggie bed areas.



Digging the hole for the water tank



Retaining Wall

We have managed to grow some veggies successfully but it has been a bit of a battle trying to keep the rats, possums and bandicoots out of the garden. We've applied nets over "everything" to try and keep the veggies safe which works for a while but not a perfect solution. Our next plan is to enclose the garden beds to keep the wildlife out.

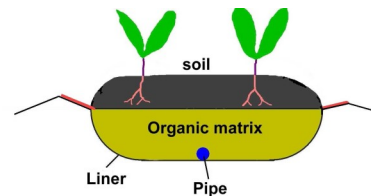


Veggies Growing

Wicking by Easy-Grow Vegetables www.easygrowvegetables.com

Wicking

'Wicking' refers to the ability of water to 'move upwards' in most soils through capillary action. It is much like molten wax moving up in a candle wick, hence the name. We use wicking by creating a 'bath' of about 8 to 15 cm deep, which includes water storage. In and above that we place 30 to 40 cm soil.



Close to the water table the soil is very wet; at 30 cm high it is only damp. This gives plants optimum growing conditions somewhere in the soil. Plants have water they can use even under the hottest and driest conditions.

Wicking systems

Wicking systems consist of a container or bed with a bottom that can hold water up to 15cm deep. At the bottom is a water reservoir that gets filled through a vertical inlet. The beds or boxes are filled with mixtures of local soils and compost, well-rotted manure or worm casts (worm manure). We add organic minerals and compost worms. On top of the soil we spread mulch to keep down weeds, evaporation and temperature, and to feed the worms.



We cover the boxes or beds with 30% shade cloth to protect against sun, wind and large insects. Easy-Grow systems can be Styrofoam boxes under netting on a table, a bed made from local stones under mosquito netting, or a number of beds within a 6m x 4m shade-house.



Advantages

Our systems provide us with fresh healthy vegetables virtually all year round at very low cost.

Weeding is minimal. The plastic keeps out the roots from competing plants and the mulch suppresses weed-seeds from germinating. We don't have to kneel as the beds are 45 cm above the ground, some are higher.

We water only once every five to twenty one days, depending on the season, weather and crops. We can use automatic watering systems in summer to supply part of the needed water.

Wicking systems use minimal water because there is almost no evaporation or leakage into the subsoil.

Once set-up the systems require little time. That means that we can go on holidays as our neighbours look after them willingly, in exchange for produce.

Feeding plants in these systems is essential as they produce large amounts of plant material. Feeding can be traditionally or organically, but must be in low doses spread over the crop's life.



VEGETABLES

APRIL: Asian greens, Asparagus, Beans, Beetroot, Broad beans, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celery, Celeriac, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Leek, Onion, Parsnip, Pea, Potato, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silverbeet, Spinach, Squash, Strawberry, Tomato, Turnip, Zucchini.

MAY: Asian greens, Asparagus crowns, Beans, Beetroot, Broad beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celery, Celeriac, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Leek, Onion, Parsnip, Pea, Potato, Radish, Rhubarb, Shallots, Silverbeet, Spinach, Strawberry, Tomato, Turnip.

HERBS

APRIL

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.

MAY

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

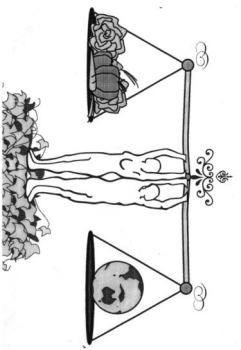
Perennials & Bi-Annuals: Catnip, Chicory, Chives, Perennial Coriander, Fennel, Hyssop, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Lovage, Marjoram, Mint, Mushroom Plant, Oregano, Parsley, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Winter Tarragon, Thyme, Upland Cress, Watercress, Winter Savoury. **Can still plant, but it is getting towards the end of the season as they like warm weather** – Basil, Ceylon Spinach.

COMPANION PLANTING FOR APRIL

Plant	Companions	Function	Foes
Asparagus	Tomatoes, Parsley, Basil		
Beans	Potatoes Carrots, Cucumber, cauliflower, summer savoury, most other vegetables and herbs.		Onions Garlic Gladiolus
Beetroot	Onions, Lettuce, Cabbage, Silver beet, Kohlrabi		
Brassica's (Cabbage, Cauliflower, Broccoli)	Aromatic plants, sage, dill, camomile, beets, peppermint, rosemary, Beans, Celery, Onions, Potatoes, dwarf zinnias.	Dill attracts a wasp to control cabbage moth. Zinnias attract lady bugs to protect plants.	Strawberries, Tomatoes
Broad beans	Potatoes, Peas, Beans		
Carrots	Lettuce, Peas, Leeks, Chives, Onions, Cucumbers, Beans, tomatoes, worm-wood, sage, rosemary		Dill in flower and being stored with apples
Cauliflower	Celery		
Celery & Celeriac	Chives, Leeks, Tomatoes, Dwarf Beans, Brassica's		
Leek	Onion, celery, carrot		
Lettuce	tall flowers, carrots, radish, onion family	Flowers offer light shade for lettuce	
Onion and garlic	Beets, summer savoury, tomatoes, lettuce, strawberries, camomile		
Peas	Carrots, turnips, corn, beans, radishes, cucumbers, most vegetables and herbs		Onions, garlic gladiolas, potatoes
Potato	Beans, cabbage, marigold, horseradish (plant at corners of patch) eggplant, sweet alyssum.	Alyssum attracts beneficial wasps and acts as a living ground cover	Pumpkin, squash, cucumber, sunflower, tomato, raspberry
Tomatoes	Asparagus, Parsley, Chives, Onion, Broccoli, Sweet Basil, marigold, carrots, parsley.		Kohlrabi, potato, fennel, cabbage
Spinach	Strawberries		
Squash	Nasturtium Corn		
Strawberries	Bush bean, spinach, borage, lettuce		Cabbage

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 20 May 2010