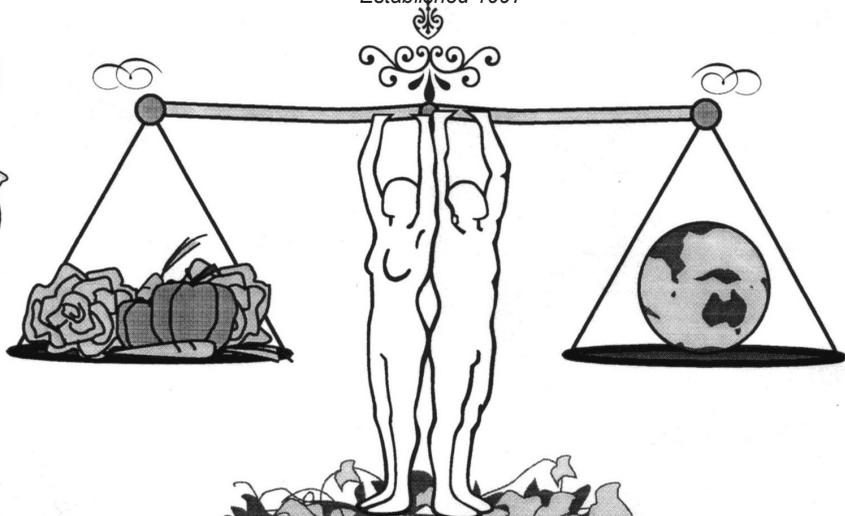


GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



NEWSLETTER

Volume 21 - FEBRUARY 2017 Issue 2
GARDENING IN SUMMER

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 16th March 2017

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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Seed Assistants	Maggie Golightly
Supper Co-ordinator	Paul Roberson (07) 5598 6609 Heather Ryan

Newsletter Contributions are welcome. Send in a photo of what's going on in your patch. Deadline for contributions is the **second Monday** of the month. 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 2017:

Overdue: Kim Vereckei (393), Frank Rebesco (342), Celia Forrest (351), Ray & Cheryl Finlayson (397), Amy Lukens (356), John Palmer (357), Maria & Paul Roberson (4), Geoffrey Williams (293), Megan Keeler (358), Marion Symons (155), Karen Collins (350), Daniel Rhoades (399)

February: Margaret Reichelt (111), Barry O'Rourke (185), Karen Hart (198), Roger & Pauline Behrendorff (232), Barbara Morgan (246), Ken & Pat Jenyns (273), Anne-Maree Andrew (337), Shem Pireh (361), Danny Li (384), Bill & Susan Smart (386), Dolphe Cooke & Gillian Tubbs (403)

March: Angela Anderson (323), Judy Reiser (338), John Clarke (345), Lana Beloff (363), Maggie Golightly (365), Fran Janes (366), Rachael Lebeter (367), Tricia Oh (368), Ros Griffith (378), Beverley Geraghty (404), Elizabeth Grippo (405)

Thanks to Contributors this month:

Diane Kelly, Dorothy Coe, Rachael Lebeter, Amy Lukens and Cathie Hodge.

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

Upcoming Guest Speakers

March

**Janelle from Djanbung Gardens
Permaculture College**

Permaculture expert Janelle will be joining us to talk about Food Forests, in particular how to plan a patch of interrelated species for a forest garden. So leave a little patch in your garden to plant your own permaculture food forest in March!

April

Jema from Wellsome

The wonderful Jema Lee will share her insightful approach to nutrition and how we can use it to our benefit. She will also give us some take-home tips to improve our health and well-being.

Workshops

Abilities Plus – Permaculture

All these workshops are held at 2 Market Street, Carrara (Behind the Back Page Sports Bar and Woolworths)

Come and chat about a vegetable, herb or plant and learn how to cook it....

Workshop are from 10am to 12 noon

27th March - Make your own cleaners & skin products

**Cost is \$5.00
BOOKINGS REQUIRED**

For more information contact Lyn Mansfield
M: 0409 645 888
E: lynmansfield14@bigpond.com
W: <http://abilitiespluspermaculture.com/>

Organic gardening items for sale

Sell as a lot — \$800
Contact Jenny 0409647662

Due to a house move into a smaller place, the following items are for sale.

Organic garden set up

- 4 (Four) x handmade cypress wood garden beds; basic configuration is 1.2 m by 2.4m by 0.4m
- modular design. Slot in system with flexibility. Can adjust configuration to suit. Gives options for square, rectangle or corner set ups. Can also go upwards.

*no metal no plastic no chemicals

* wood planks slot into grooves of support columns easily

*cypress is untreated (chemical free) and naturally termite resistant

- bag of organic mineral rock
- bag of organic blood and bone
- bottle of organic humus
- bag of charcoal
- bag of organic fertiliser
- 20m of Vege net (worth over \$150)
- garden trays and seedling trays
- packets of organic seeds (2 takeaway containers full)
- 10L worm juice



All you need is the soil!

Garden and equipment was set up Beyond Organic with assistance from Gold Coast Permaculture.

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 any bits and pieces that we might have spare and would like to share.

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 about, please email Dorothy with the details at dorothy@dorothycoe.com

Offers / Wants / Swap / Share

Three Figs Café & Greenbird Gallery

- Locally made delicious food
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- Shady gardens and landscaping
- Handmade gifts & homewares

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Currumbin Valley

For bookings phone Mirella 0419 170 654

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GC Visitors Guide 2013

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Q & A - From The Nov & Jan Meetings By Cathie Hodge

Q. Shade cloth or not over garden in summer?

- A. There are some issues to consider:
- The risk of the netting being ripped off during a storm
 - Air circulation for plants
 - The best UV protection percentage
 - The cost

See this article regarding shade cloth for plants <http://www.sitshade.com.au/blog/how-to-choose-shade-cloth-for-plants/>

Q. Stink bugs – how to eliminate?

- A. Maria's suggestion:
- Put on gloves
 - Wear eye protection
 - Fill a bucket with hot soapy water
 - Sweep the stink bugs into the hot water with a hand broom

Q. Growing rhubarb on the Gold Coast?

- A. Rhubarb grows well in cooler climates, but not so well in the subtropics. However, here is a surprising suggestion from Peter Cundall, found on an ABC Gardening Australia Fact Sheet <http://www.abc.net.au/gardening/stories/s1952469.htm>

Derrick: "I've noticed Peter Cundall grows marvellous *rhubarb*. I've tried growing *rhubarb* in Queensland, in good deep-dug soil and fertilised it with horse manure. All I get is tiny tops which wither and die. Is this a local problem or is it that I'm not doing something right?"

Peter answers: "The reason why your *rhubarb* isn't growing is because you live in a tropical area and *rhubarb* loves the cold in winter. Here's a tip that will astonish you. Dig out the whole root system in winter, put it in a plastic bag while it's still moist, and put it in the freezer. Freeze it solid for about a month; take it out and plant it in the garden and you'll be amazed at the results"

Q. When is Sapodilla fruit ripe?

- A. See the following information from a Tropical Fruit Growers' website - http://www.tfgsf.com/?page_id=560

"When you have selected a mature sapodilla, place it on the counter to ripen in the warmth of the kitchen. You can also place it in a paper bag to ripen the fruit a bit earlier. It will usually take about 3-5 days to ripen. Sapodillas are ripe when they are soft, like a peach, and have a lovely, sweet aroma."

Q. Spots on a leaf sample?

- A. This is myrtle rust which is a fungal infection.

Hard prune the plant. Take off all the damaged leaves. Bag them & put them in the bin. Don't put the leaves in your compost. Wash your clothes before going into the garden again. Give the plants extra potash & silica to strengthen the leaves of the plant.

Q. Ants on passionfruit vine flowers & fruit dropping off. Are these related?

- A. Probably not. Passionfruit plants are shallow-rooted. They need plenty of water, especially from rain. This year we have experienced an unusually dry season. The fruit could be dropping off due to an oversupply of fruit for our current climatic conditions.

A discussion was held regarding the benefits of ants. They are great pollinators.

Become observant of what is really going on in your garden.

Maria suggested that we should avoid being an organic gardener with a chemical gardener's brain. Don't think that you need to kill a particular bug with a product as you may end up killing other beneficial insects in your garden.

Encourage birds into your garden (bird bath/poles in your garden for birds / flowering plants/etc).

Greg Plevy (Wormtec) stressed the importance of microbes in the garden for strengthening plants (i.e. raising their Brix or sugar level). The higher Brix level will deter bugs from eating your plants.

Q. Fruit fly – how to handle?

A. Refer to previous Club presentations regarding fruit fly control. Check previous newsletters.

Useful Hints and Tips

Passionfruit

The passionfruit thrives in a sunny, subtropical environment. If you live in a cooler climate, you can have great success planting vines in front of a north-facing wall with good reflective heat and protection from cold southerly winds. Tropical gardeners get the best results in a spots that offers a little dappled light in the middle of summer.

The best time for planting is spring to summer. The vines are extremely vigorous so make sure you have a strong support. You can make the most of the vigor by creating a quick screen on a wire fence or trellis, or even provide additional shade over a pergola.

Passionfruit aren't particularly fussy about soil types, as long as the drainage is good. They do love a well-prepared soil though, so dig in lots of compost and well-rotted manures. If drainage is poor, create a generous planting mound.

When it comes to pH, something around 5.5 to neutral is ideal. Add a little lime if your soil is acid. Mix in some blood and bone, too, to get your vine off to a flying start.

Regular deep watering is vital through the warmer months, especially while flowers and fruit are forming. Passionfruit are heavy feeders. Apply a citrus food as direct in September, December and February and keep the root zone well mulched with compost and decayed straw.

Passionfruit usually flower in spring for a summer harvest, but in warmer areas many vines flower again autumn to produce a winter crop. It takes around 12 months to get your first good crop. A well-maintained passionfruit vine can produce for up to five years. Most gardeners plant a new vine every 2-3 years to guarantee an on-going, juicy supply.

Pruning essential:

An unpruned passionfruit vine will soon become a mass of unproductive growth, so annual spring pruning is essential for keeping a vine in top shape. The primary aim is to thin it out. This allows easy access for pollinating bees and improves airflow about the vine. Start by removing any dead and old woody growth, cutting it out at the base. Then trim back the remaining healthy growth to a manageable size. You can be quite ruthless, because the flowers and fruit will develop on the new spring growth.

If you have a grafted variety, you need to remove any growth from below the graft on a regular basis. This can be more vigorous than the desired vine and will take over if allowed. Avoid digging around the roots, too, as this encourages suckers of a different species to spread all over the garden.

Source: Your Garden, Summer 2006

**January 2017 Guest Speaker Notes
by Diane Kelly**

Greg Plevy, the owner of Wormtec Worm Farming and Vermiculture, has spent the past sixteen years perfecting the production, extraction and storage of organic microbial fertilisers, and uses his products as a bio-control to help prevent pest and disease attacks. Greg gave the following presentation at our January Club meeting.

Microbes (single-celled organisms whose main job is to decompose matter) make the nutrients and minerals in the soil soluble so that they can be absorbed by plants. They also “eat” fungi that are damaging our plants, and help solve soil-compaction problems.

Soil compaction is a concern because the roots of plants can't spread and obtain nutrients. Plants that receive insufficient nutrients become stressed, and when plants become stressed, they emit pheromones. Pheromones attract small insects, which in turn damage the plants – if a plant is healthy, it does not smell and does not get damaged. Microbes live in the gaps between the soil particles, and as they move they open up the soil and soften it. Air and water can then penetrate the soil, and plants can return to health. So the more microbes present, the healthier the soil and your plants will be.

Greg suggested that we don't spray chemicals on our plants, because they will destroy the beneficial microbes on them. Also, chemical fertilizers kill the soil, and are not sustainable.

Wormtec's main product is their Organic Worm Extract, which is made by extracting soil microbes from high-grade worm castings and composts. These microbes can stay dormant in their sealed container for up to eight months – when they are exposed to air, they become active again. When applied to soil, the worm extract helps retain moisture in the root zone of plants. When the microbes become active, they will consume the nutrients and minerals in the soil, and retain them in the upper soil column and root zone – this

in turn stops the nutrients and minerals from being leached from the soil.

The Organic Worm Extract can be applied at full strength initially, but then a 5:1 down to a 30:1 ratio can be used effectively. When used in agriculture, the microbial liquid can improve pasture grass and Brix levels. The healthier grass is, the more nourishing it is to animals – and in turn, when their appetites are satisfied they rest more – and so their bodies are enabled to grow more quickly.

Greg then went on to mention that there are alternatives to using the Wormtec product, because thatch, mulch and compost also provide a habitat for soil microbes. The microbes “eat” the material and any disease spores, and produce nutrients using the same principles, even though the process is slower.

Greg also reminded us that no microbial treatments solve problems immediately, so we need to “give it a go”. Have a think about what you want to do with your soil, and what your gardening goals are – and these should include developing healthy soil, so that we don't need additional fertilizers.

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0412 382 989 or speak with me
during the meeting.**

Useful Hints and Tips

Beetroot

Beetroot is an easy crop to grow and one of the most useful since the entire plant can be eaten. Try steamed beetroot leaves, finely mashed with butter, pepper and a pinch of nutmeg.

Beetroot should follow well manured crops such as cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and tomatoes. Beetroot will thrive in any soil that has plenty of organic matter, well-drained, and relatively low in nitrogen. I have found only one common failure in growing beetroot and that is "boron deficiency". Examples of boron deficiency in beetroot culture are too much lime (calcium) too much nitrogen (fresh manures) and too much potash. Results will be very slow, stunted growth, sometimes dying back in the centre leaves and making only small rather woody beets that often have black spots on the outer skin. In such cases the remedy is cheap, simple and often fast - borax in water at the rate of half a teaspoon to 4.5 litres of water applied to 1 square metre.

Generally one application is enough. I always plant beetroot from seed and during summer months in warm moist well-drained soil. I produce edible sized beets in five to six weeks. Summer grown beetroot should be well mulched so as to ensure steady moisture and cool soil conditions. Beetroot is best watered heavily and infrequently. Light, frequent watering of tap rooted plants is one of the most common causes of failure, for it encourages a large number of shallow roots that become vulnerable to rapid changes of temperature in our summer conditions.

Beetroot and Its Role in Health:

In his book *The Encyclopedia of Healing Juices* (Parker Publishing 1994) John Heineman PhD states that beetroot - and in particular its juice - is a blood building herb that detoxifies blood and renews it with minerals and natural sugars. In fact, Dr Heineman has titled his

chapter on beetroot juice "Help Keep Yourself Cancer Free". He outlines a number of case studies including some mentioned in the Spring 1993 issue of *Folk Medicine Journal* (1:98-104). He goes on to describe the work of a Dr Alexander Ferencz MC from Hungary who personally observed with hundreds of cancer patients that "raw, finely grated, powdered or juiced beetroot had remarkable chemotherapeutic properties to it." An article in the February 25, 1996 issue of *Cancer Letters* reports that an animal study (sorry) shows that beetroot has a significant tumor-inhibiting effect. The studies' abstract states "The combined findings suggest that beetroot ingestion can be one of the useful means to prevent cancer".

In a lecture on nutrition presented in Brisbane on 10.8.1999, Robert Buist PhD, scientist, author and nutritionist stated that "if you have cancer, seriously get into beetroot". He extended this statement by saying that some studies have shown as much as a 60% reduction in tumours". You may like to read KAPADIAG J et al "Chemoprevention of lung and skin cancer by beta vulgaris (beet) root extract". *Cancer Letters* 10:1-2 Feb 27, 1996, 211-4.

As well, the iron in beetroot, especially if it is juiced, is much more easily assimilated by the body than man-made forms of iron such as those found in supplements made from chemical isolates.

Along with broccoli and spinach, beetroot contains a substance called betaine. Studies point to this substance as a contributor in the prevention of coronary artery and cerebrovascular disease. (*Arteriosclerosis and Thrombosis* Vol 14 (3) March 1994.

Source: Brisbane Organic Growers Newsletter September 1999 - John Box

Let's Share our Tips of "All Things Gardening" by Diane Kelly

With temperatures soaring around the country, and many areas receiving little or no rain, it is a good time to look at some hints about water.

Firtly, let's look at some general ways to conserve water – and especially for those on tank water who have limited supplies:

1. Remember that a dripping tap can waste more than 200 litres of water per day, so inspect your taps, pipes and hoses regularly. To check your home for leaks, turn off every tap and appliance that uses water, then read your water meter. Wait four hours and read again. If the meter has ticked over, something is leaking!
2. Don't use water when another tool will do the job. Use a rake, broom or outdoor blower to clean paths and drive-ways, rather than a hose.
3. When it does rain, remember to turn off any automated irrigation systems.

Now some gardening water hints:

1. Let's start with a basic one - remember to water at the right times – early morning or evening to avoid evaporation, and not when it is windy.
2. Mulch your garden – as well as reducing evaporation and water run-off, a good quality mulch will also provide nutrients to the plants and restrict weed growth (and weeds are thirsty people!) It is estimated that you can reduce water loss by up to 70% by mulching your plants.
3. Use your garden as a tank – soil is a natural reservoir of water. The more thoroughly it is cultivated and the more decayed organic matter (humus) it contains, the greater its capacity to store water.

4. Plants such as melons, cucumbers, marrows, pumpkins, runner beans and tomatoes are very thirsty. Regular watering of these crops is essential during long dry spells – spasmodic watering can cause the flowers of some crops to set poorly, and ripening fruits may split. The large leaves of cucurbits (plants from the gourd family) wilt quickly with water stress, causing young fruits to abort.
5. Water the soil thoroughly, usually weekly, giving at least 25 litres a square metre. If you give too little, water will not reach the roots even though the top layer appears wet. If you continue to apply small amounts, the roots may be drawn up to the moist surface and will suffer even more if this dries out.
6. Always collect as much rainwater as you possibly can – not only is it free, but it is more beneficial to plants than water out of a tap.
7. If your pot plants become dry at the roots, give them a good soaking by sitting them in water overnight before feeding with fertilizer.
8. Be careful not to splash water on the foliage of plants in bright, sunny weather – the water droplets on the leaves act like small magnifying glasses, scorching the leaves.
9. It is important to keep vegetables well-watered if they are not to bolt and run to seed and be spoiled. Plants like celery and tomatoes need regular supplies of water, or celery will bolt quickly, and tomatoes will suffer problems such as blossom end rot (dark brown patches on the base of the tomatoes) due to a lack of water. Irregular watering will also cause tomato skins to split; after a dry spell, if they are given a lot of water, the upsurge of sap in the stems causes the skins to rupture.

If You Only do One thing this Month Grow some Cassava

By Diane Kelly

I've been having a look at the planting guide for our area in Annette McFarlane's "Organic Vegetable Gardening", and it was interesting to note how many vegetables can be grown during April to September – and how many spaces there are for things to grow in the other six months of the year.

But there is one thing that we should be able to grow all year round on the Coast, so our challenge for this month is to grow some cassava.

These plants are considered "very easy" to grow (sounds good to me!), and are best grown from cuttings, which makes them an economical option. The plants are fast-growing, and typically grow as multi-stemmed shrubs up to 3m high. The leaves can be eaten as a cooked vegetable, but it is the root harvest that is most prized.

Plants are best propagated from stout cuttings at least 2.5cm in diameter and 30cm long. Plant the cuttings directly into garden beds by burying them to a depth of 10cm. Allow at least 1m between cuttings to allow room for plants to develop. The soil does not need to be overly fertile, and actually if the soil is too rich, it can encourage the growth of leaves and stems, rather than tubers. The tubers will grow vertically or horizontally depending on the structure of the soil, and crops can be grown in full or part shade.

A single cutting will form 4-8 large roots at the base of each plant. Harvest 6-10 months after planting, or leave them in the ground until required. Take care not to break or cut the tubers during the harvest process – any roots that you fail to unearth will not regrow. It is preferable to prepare and cook any harvest within 24 hours of digging.

Cassava is largely a pest and disease-free crop, but remember to wear gloves and long sleeves when planting, pruning or harvesting,

as they do produce sap.

Cooking: Think of cassava like potatoes: it can be steamed, boiled, baked, or fried before being eaten on its own, mashed, or added to other dishes. Or you can make chips out of it. Cassava has a very mild flavour that takes seasonings well. To prepare it for cooking, just peel off the outer skin, chop it into pieces, and cook until soft and no longer crunchy. Cassava is the third greatest source of carbohydrate in the world, and is an essential part of Brazilian cuisine. The flour can also be made into breads and cakes.

A word of caution: a small number of people are also allergic to the cassava plant, so always be sure to peel and cook the roots before eating, or boil the leaves.

So have a go at cassava. It is easy to grow and has many uses – and if you enjoy vegetable bakes, have a look at Annette's recipe in our food section.



Recipes Column

From Annette McFarlane's "Organic Vegetable Gardening", and featuring Cassava – see our "If you only Do One thing this Month" section

Vegetable Bake



Most cooks are familiar with potato bake, but if you grow cassava and other root vegetables, why not enjoy the deliciously sweet flavour of cassava in a vegetable bake?

Ingredients

- 1 cassava root
- 1 sweet potato
- 2 potatoes
- 2 large carrots
- 1 red salad onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 40g butter
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 125g tasty cheese, grated
- Salt and pepper
- Sprinkle of nutmeg

Method

Peel and slice thickly the root vegetables, then boil or roast them in a little oil in the ov-

en until they are cooked but still firm. Set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, make a simple cheese sauce. Melt the butter in a saucepan and stir in the flour. Gradually add the milk, stirring, and cook until the mixture forms a smooth sauce. Add most of the cheese, reserving a little to sprinkle over the dish before baking. Add salt and pepper to taste and sprinkle over with nutmeg.

Place alternate layers of root vegetables, red onion and cheese sauce in an ovenproof dish. Sprinkle the top with the remaining grated cheese. Bake for 30 minutes.

From Diane Kelly

=====

Raw treats from January's Supper Table offerings:

Almond Date Coconut Balls

Ingredients

- Almond meal
- Finely chopped dates
- Shredded coconut
- Coconut oil
- Maple syrup or Honey

Mix ingredients together in proportions to suit your taste, and form into small balls.

From Amy Lukens

Chocolate and Maca Balls



Ingredients

- 150g nuts (I just use whatever nuts I have at the time - often I use mix nuts eg. almonds, macadamias, brazil nuts)
- 150g of medjool dates
- 4 tbsp raw cacao powder
- 2 tbsp maca powder
- 3 tbsp coconut oil
- pinch of salt

Method

Chop everything up in a blender, make into balls and freeze for 20 mins then leave in the fridge or serve.

If you don't have maca powder to hand then you can just leave it out and maybe add a tiny bit less coconut oil.

From Dorothy Coe

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

Community Exchange Service by Dorothy Coe

Myself and another lady (Louise) recently volunteered to get the Community Exchange System (CES) up and running online. CES is a global online system that provides the means for its users to exchange their goods and services, both locally and remotely without money.

There are over 800 exchange groups within the network globally and over 50 within Australia.

I have already been trading plants, seeds, seedlings, and I also had an order for herb cuttings from a member in NSW which I sent to her in the mail.

The system can be used for any products and services not just gardening related products/services.

Signup free at -

<https://www.communityexchange.net.au>

In addition to trading online via the website we will be organising meetups so that we can trade in a community setting. We may also hold some training days too.

Any questions feel free to talk to me during the meetings or you can contact Louise who is the main Administrator at gold-coasttweed@gmail.com

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 chill 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.

Brisbane Organic Growers Handbook

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

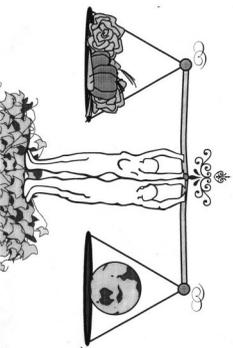
Annual: Borage, Calendula, Chamomile, Chervil, Coriander, Dill, Garlic, Italian parsley, Misome, Mizuna, Nasturtium, Rocket.

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 16th March 2017