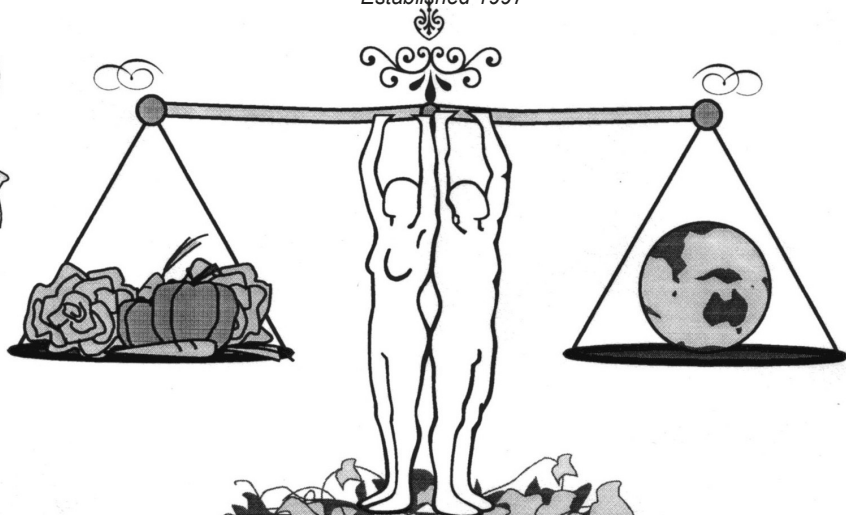


GOLD COAST ORGANIC GROWERS Inc.

Established 1997



NEWSLETTER

Volume 21 - MARCH 2017 Issue 3
GARDENING IN AUTUMN

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OUR NEXT MEETING: Thursday 20th April 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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Librarians	Ann Brown 0403 936 360 Dayne Petersen
Seed Bank Seed Assistants	Lyn Mansfield 0409 645 888 Maggie Golightly Bill Smart
Supper Co-ordinator	Heather Ryan Deb Phillips

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 – March 2017:

Overdue: Kim Vereckei (393), Frank Rebeco (342), Celia Forrest (351), Ray & Cheryl Finlayson (397), Amy Lukens (356), John Palmer (357), Geoffrey Williams (293), Megan Keeler (358), Marion Symons (155), Karen Collins (350), Daniel Rhoades (399), 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), Gillian Tubbs & Dolphe Cooke (403)

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

April: Gai Morrow (309), Kerstein Trueman (346), Sue Beckinsale (373), Lynn Tilley (382), Nancy Hageman (388), Elizabeth Hughes (389), Justin Gage (406), Suzi Lucas (407), Deborah Phillips (408), Vickie Searle (409)

Thanks to Contributors this month:

Diane Kelly, Dorothy Coe, Bruce Kelly, Jill Barber, Megan Keeler, Rachael Lebeter, Lyn Mansfield.

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

Upcoming Guest Speakers

April - Jema from Wellsome

After 10 years in the health industry, Jema brings her friendly, fun and informative approach to improving health and well-being to the club. She will share some of her key insights into how we can feel better, and be better, every day!

May - Presentations by Club Members

It's that time again! If you have a topic of expertise or a garden story to share, our May meeting is your chance to give a 5-10 minute presentation to fellow club members. We all learn SO MUCH from these presentations and would love to hear from YOU! If you have a something to share, please send me an email or let one of the committee members know at the next club meeting!

Workshops

Abilities Plus – Permaculture

Sat 18th March: 7am—10am
Working Bee at GC Hospital Community Gardens, 1 Hospital Blvd, Southport

Sun 19th March: 9am—11am
Logan Food Gardeners, 49 Burrow Road, Waterford West

Mon 27th March: 9:30— 11:30am
Making your own skin and kitchen products

Sat 1st April: 11:30—12:30pm
Health Talk – Jema Lee, Essence of Living Studio, 3/52 Peerless Avenue, Mermaid Beach

Tues 4th April: 9:30—11:00am
Importance of Vitamins & Nutrients, Robina Library – Jema Lee

Monday 10th April: 9:30—11:30am
Visit to Katrina's Place, 72 Zipfs Road, Redland Bay & Indigiscapes, 17 Runnymede Road, Capalaba

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

**Q & A - From The February Meeting
By Cathie Hodge**

**Q. Pawpaw tree with too many branches.
How many to trim off?**

A. If the tree is doing well then there is no need to trim branches, but feed the tree well with manures, compost, etc

**Q. Pawpaw tree with too many pawpaws.
Should some be culled?**

A. It is probably a good idea to cull them gradually. The green pawpaws can be used to make green pawpaw salad. There are plenty of online recipes.

Danny also suggested that green pawpaw makes a tasty pickle that can be used in salads or stir fry or soup. Peel off the skin and finely slice the rest of the pawpaw. Place in a container & cover with apple cider vinegar & sugar to taste. Leave this mixture in the fridge for a day or so, to create pickled green pawpaw.

Q. Lemonade tree – 8 years old. It has always produced well but this year it has scale & produced smaller fruit. How to improve?

A. White oil could be sprayed on the tree for the scale. However, white oil can burn the leaves, so only use a very small amount during the hot, dry weather. Spray the tree in the late afternoon, even after 6pm in summer if it going to be hot the next day.

Fertilise the tree & water it well.

Q. How to know when avocados are ready to pick?

A. There are a couple of ways to tell if ready to pick

- When the skin is shiny – don't pick. It's ready to pick when the skin becomes duller.

- Try bending the stem that attaches the avocado to the tree. If it snaps, it is ready. If it doesn't snap, it isn't ready to pick.

Note: When you pick an avocado, it is important to leave a little of the stem on the tree. Don't leave a piece that is too long as this will cause rot in the tree. Likewise, don't pull the stem out of the tree. Preferably cut the avocado leaving a very small stem.

Q. Are pH meters any good to use?

A. In Maria's opinion, pH meters are very tricky to use & it is difficult to achieve an accurate reading. The soil must be moist, but not too moist. The pH meter must be recalibrated with neutral water after each use
A pH kit is good enough for the home gardener.



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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

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Useful Hints and Tips

Out-door Growing Tips for Herbs:

- Herbs grow naturally in many different soils and climates, so choose the appropriate herbs for the prevailing conditions in your area.
- Most herbs prefer full sun and free-draining soil.
- Don't pick more than one-third of a young plant or more than half of a mature specimen at the one time. The more often you pick, the bushier and healthier herbs become.
- Don't over-fertilize – there will be too much soft leafy growth at the expense of essential oils.
- Snails and insects like herbs, too. Be vigilant and pick off grubs by hand, and trap snails in small saucers of beer.
- To develop full flavour, most herbs should have at least five hours of sunlight a day or 16 hours under fluorescent lights.
- Many herbs grow better when planted next to other herbs, but some will struggle in the wrong combinations. For example, mint hates growing near parsley.

Quote from "Herb & Vegetable Gardening" - Murdoch Books

Jills' Garden Update

Well, I finally took the plunge and got started on my green manure planting. Last year, I had my first planting done in December, and the second lot by the end of January, but the heat and humidity has put me off this year till now. Also, I decided to see how some things would grow over summer, thus tying up most of my garden beds. The successful results of this experiment, in my location, under shade cloth, have been: more hardy leafy greens: kale, mizuna, some silver beet, rocket, mustard ruby streaks, climbing spinach, Osaka purple mustard greens, mukunu wenna and surinam spinach. Unsuccessful have been: lettuces, coriander, carrots, beans, beetroot and most brassicas. I've found that these either bolt very soon or become infested with bugs or just don't grow much.



Now, however, many of those things have either finished or come to nought, and I figure if I get the green manure planted now, there will still be time. It needs to put on some height, get chopped up and forked under, then rot down so that I can get brassicas planted and come to maturity well before next summer, when the bugs come on in full, destructive force. So, that's my rationale for getting on with it asap.

It's not only been hard getting out there in the heat for me: it was also hard digging up plants that might have grown bigger. The heat I've beaten by going out early in the day

for a couple of hours, and then a couple more hours last thing in the day. A lot can be achieved by four hours' work, consistently, every day.

As for the existing plants, they didn't seem to ever be growing bigger, and I needed the beds cleared, so we're now eating small carrots and the remains of the silver beet. The beetroots just weren't growing, so I was glad to clear them out. I was curious to see how the Jerusalem artichokes had grown, never having grown them before, so I was happy to dig them up...and was amazed to see just how much they had multiplied! I'll bring some to the Swap Table next meeting; they look a bit like turmeric and they're delicious, I think!



Today, I took Maria's advice and dug out my asparagus. It had pretty well stopped producing, so it was a relief to claim back that bed. It now has a big layer of homemade compost spread on it, waiting for its dose of Japanese Millet and Cow Peas with a little Buckwheat tomorrow morning. I've also been using Mung Beans, another nitrogen fixer.

In about 6 weeks, these crops will be ready to cut down and immediately fork under to make sure that the nitrogen that is released with

their decomposing stays in the soil rather than escaping into the atmosphere. At this point I'll add palagonite, for boosting the mineral content in the soil, and biochar, for housing microbes and aiding moisture retention. Finally, a light covering of lucerne mulch will also help to keep the moisture from evaporating.

A further week or two into April and they'll be beautifully ready for planting seedlings into. Then, I will apply Biodynamic 500, a powerful soil activator used to bring the calcium activity and the sun/life forces to the soil. These forces cause seed germination, root development and growth of the plant as well as humus formation in the soil. It also improves soil structure, and is used a lot in agriculture to improve crop productivity, nutritional value and strength and vitality of vegetables and fruit.

The following week: in less than 3 days the green manure has come up (see pic), and I'll include another photo before the next meeting. In the meantime, I'm madly making more compost, from garden prunings, kitchen waste and horse manure, so that I'll have lots to add to the next beds when they come free. Maybe I'll even prevail on Graeme to make a couple more wooden enclosures for the remaining beds to keep them together better.



Useful Hints and Tips

Leafmould:

Leafmould is one of the most valued sources of organic matter that a gardener can use. It makes an excellent soil conditioner, but also has low levels of nutrients (0.4 per cent nitrogen, 0.2 percent phosphate and 0.3 per cent potassium), and is usually slightly acidic.

Leafmould is a material that would slowly form naturally beneath trees in a woodland setting over many years. Making your own is a quite a long term project, as the leaves take time in order to decay into a dark, course and crumbly compost-like material.

Making Leafmould:

1. Rake up fallen leaves into heaps. The best time to do this is just after it has rained, when the leaves are moist; but they can also be collected dry, and wet later. Remove any foreign material, such as plastic wrappers, from the heaps. Collect the leaves and place them in plastic bags or black bags. The latter are better as they block out most of the light and encourage fungal activity.
2. To every 30 cm (1 ft) layer of leaves, add a small amount of organic fertiliser, such as dried, pelleted chicken manure or a measure of organic nitrogenous fertiliser, such as sulphate of ammonia (which contains 16-21 per cent nitrogen).
3. When the bag is almost full, place it in the position where it is to eventually be left while its contents decompose, and water it thoroughly so that the contents are soaking wet.
4. Over a period of about two years, the pile of leaves will decompose and settle in the bag. These leaves will be pressed tightly together, with some remaining almost whole, and others disintegrating completely. When the leaves are ready to use, the bag can be split open and the leaves used as an effective mulch or soil conditioner.

**February 2017 Guest Speaker Notes
by Diane Kelly, Penny J & Cathie H**

“Irrigation through Clay – i.e. How to get your Plants to Water Themselves!”

David Borthwick grew up in Eromanga, which is a town some 1,100 kms west of Brisbane (near Birdsville) that boasts a population of 30-40 people. With an agricultural background, David is passionate about helping people grow the food they need – and growing up where he did, it is easy to see why one of his focuses is on water.

David was living in Brisbane when he decided to rip up his six raised vegetable gardens. He felt that he was not getting much of a return for his efforts – the tomatoes had bugs, the lettuces bolted – but he did not want to rely on the supermarkets for food because they encourage waste.

So he began to consider why plants die, and came up with several reasons:

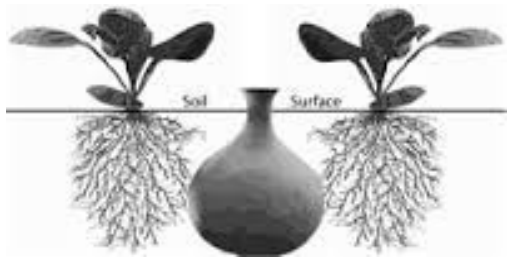
1. Time – people don't have enough spare hours to grow their own food
2. Water – gardens tend to be either overwatered or underwatered
3. Lack of community – if you don't know your neighbours, they won't look after your garden if you go away or are unwell
4. Water is expensive, and we don't always know how to use it effectively

David knew from experience that the traditional sprinklers and drip watering systems put moisture into the soil irrespective of how much is already there, so he wanted to find out how to get moisture to the root zone of plants, but not waste water. Then, during a trip to Eastern China, he came across the Olla clay system. This method uses an unglazed, bulbous pot with a narrow neck.

The pot is buried in the ground, filled with water, and then left so that the moisture seepage waters the plant roots. This system

is still used in South America and Africa, but has the disadvantage of the pots needing to be filled up as the water dissipates.

So David developed a system based on the Olla's unglazed pots, but which has narrow pipes attached to sealed units and which are fed water from a tank located above the garden which uses gravity feed. As the water moves through the pipes to the pots, it is supplied to the plants at the rate they demand using a capillary system.



Dark containers are used as tanks, as this stops algae build-up, and although nutrients can be added to the water in the tank, David recommends to not use fish or kelp products as their oil makes a film over the clay pots. David showed us cross-section pictures of a fish tank that he had filled with soil, plants and an installed “EasiOyYa” – the system he has developed – and it was fascinating to clearly see how the plant roots had moved toward the moisture source.



Water is available to plants 24/7, and the gardener just has to keep the water tank filled up. Some root matting can surround the “EasiOyYa” pots (which are about 15 cms long and in circumference) but that can easily be cleared away. The pots are installed to water an area of 30-40 cms each, and David recommends using cluster planting, rather than rows. He says that you can still mulch to stop surface evaporation and nourish the plants, and recommends that you give your seedlings a good soaking to start with, and then let the “EasiOyYa” take over.

So a system that was being used in China some 4,000 years ago has now been adapted to modern-day technology, but the idea is the same – using porous pots to water your plants when and to the amount they need. It is indeed a “plant-controlled irrigation system”.

To learn more about the “EasiOyYa” product, go to <https://easiOyYa.com>

Black Soldier Fly Larvae By Cathie Hodge

What are they? Of what use are they? How can I breed them?

I've recently become intrigued with BSFL (i.e. Black Soldier Fly Larvae) – both as composters & as an excellent protein source for my chooks.

Following the talk by Vicki from Direct Compost Solutions regarding her ‘compots’, I discovered how easy it is to breed BSFL. It's quite incidental actually

Simply place some moist, rotting food in a suitable container, cover with mulch & the adult Black Soldier Flies will be attracted to lay their eggs in the mulch. (You may have noticed BSFL co-habiting with the worms in your worm farm or breeding in your compost pile). Our subtropical climate suits them quite well.

Each female BSF can lay a staggering 400 to 900 eggs over her lifetime. Within 4 days the rotting food will contain a seething mass of larvae (maggots). These larvae will rapidly grow fatter as they consume the rotting food waste. After about 3½ to 4 weeks (longer in the winter months) they will reach the pre-pupa stage & want to migrate out of your container.

There is plenty of information on the internet regarding BSFL & suitable containers for breeding them.

So, here are a couple of links to get you started...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6kxKpNrKa0#t=3.56837> (7 mins)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=samyE_r0sXs (4 mins)

In summary, the benefits of BSFL include:

1. Easy to breed in our climate
2. They are great composters & will eat any scraps. They aren't as fussy as worms
3. Conversion of food waste into protein & fat & calcium
4. Chooks love them!!
5. And so do other critters – fish, pigs, birds, etc



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PawPaw Tree - As discussed during the Q&A in our meeting on 16-2-2017

Below tree self seeded in my veggie patch. About 4 years young and for the last year has been growing many arms all with fruit. I asked if they the arms needed to be reduced. Maria suggested not but I had already trimmed some young arms be they were to hard to pick fruit when older. see photos



This tree was won in raffle at GCOGC meeting. About five years old and has fruit tightly bunched. This causes fruit to be odd shapes as they grow close together. see photo.



From Bruce Kelly

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

Here are some reasons to grow a variety of plants:

1. Cabbages, kale, mustard, turnip, radish and Asian greens are great for stingless bees, honeybees and hoverflies. Adult hoverflies drink nectar, but their larvae are important predators of aphids.
2. Choko flowers don't appear to attract pollinators, but their vines are seldom without ladybirds – and these help control mildew, scale insects, mealybug and aphids.
3. Don't worry if your coriander flowers quickly – it is a potent insectary plant and the seed is useful in cooking. Halictid bees (notable for carrying pollen on their abdomen, not their hind legs) love their pollen and tachinid flies their nectar.
4. Triple-curved parsley looks beautiful in the garden, but its flowers are unappealing to most insects. However, Italian flat-leaved parsley is totally different – bees, beetles, tachinid flies (pictured) hoverflies and wasps flock to their flowers.
5. Basil and cosmos attract opportunist flower spiders and baby mantids, plus a range of leafcutter bees. Leafcutter bees also pollinate cucumbers, melon, gherkin and mouse melon.



With our (slightly) cooling weather, here are some hints for Autumn:

1. Continue to water vegetables and fruit trees deeply, but increase the intervals between watering as temperatures start to cool.
2. Cooling conditions are good for transplanting evergreen fruit trees and shrubs. Soak the roots the day before shifting, and keep the root-ball moist but not wet in the new location. Shade the plant while its root system is regenerating.
3. When you start planting broccoli and cabbages, keep a watch out for the larvae of the cabbage white butterfly. Apply protective sprays, or cover crops with a vegie net.
4. Conditions should be good for growing tomatoes, with fewer pest and disease problems than in the warm season. So choose your favourite variety and get planting!



5. The final hint for this month comes from Jennifer Stackhouse– and it is for our feathered friends: "Poultry appreciate a warm mash when it's cold outside. And it's simple enough to make – just mix hot water into commercial poultry mash and serve it like a thick porridge. You can add extra winter warmth by cooking up your chook's scraps so they are more appealing on colder days. Toss potato, carrot and pumpkin peelings into a saucepan with a little water and cook for a few minutes until they are soft. My chooks love them!"

Two tips about growing dragonfruit:

- (a) Make sure the plants don't take over garden areas with their shallow, spreading root systems, and
- (b) Ensure that the night-blooming flowers are hanging down for effective pollination to occur.

If You Only do One thing (in April-June) Grow Some Parsnips....

By Diane Kelly

Parsnips have to be one of my favourite vegetables – there is nothing like a couple of pieces of roasted parsnip to accompany fresh peas, mint sauce, roasted potatoes and pumpkin, and a leg of lamb. Plus there are so many other ways you can enjoy them – my mother used to mash steamed carrots and parsnips together. You can also mash them into a puree with butter and nutmeg, either on their own or mixed with equal amounts of mashed potatoes.

Parsnips make delicious shoe-string fries, and of course you can always cook them into a velvety soup that is especially good spiced with a little chilli.

There is one disadvantage to growing parsnips – in the sub-tropics they can only be planted in April, May or June, so you will need to plan out your garden space for that time frame. Also, parsnips are only grown from seed – they do not transplant well, and so are not sold as seedlings. The seeds of parsnips deteriorate quickly, so you will need to source them well to ensure viability.

Those things being said, the advantages to growing parsnips are that they demand little attention once the seedlings are thinned; they are very hardy; and they can be left in the ground until required – and we already know that they taste good.

Choose an open sunny position (although parsnips are one of the few vegetables that will tolerate some shade) and use a garden bed that has been well-manured for a previous crop. Do not use fresh manure, otherwise the parsnips will “fork”, and ensure that the soil is not shallow or stony as that will limit the growth of the root. You can dig deep cylindrical growing holes and back-fill them with compost – this provides a straight and easy passage for the roots.

Sow the seeds (after soaking them in warm water over-night) directly into the soil 2.5 to 5 cms apart, with 30 cms between rows. Firm the seeds well, as they require good soil contact, and keep the soil moist at all times. The seeds should germinate within four weeks, and they should be thinned out when they are about 2.5 cms high. Continue thinning until they are spaced 15-25 cms apart. Remember to hoe regularly between the plants to keep down the weeds, and because carrots, celery, parsley and parsnips are related, avoid planting these crops in rotation.

Parsnips are usually harvested once the foliage has died back. The last of the crop should be dug up in late winter, before the roots start to produce new leaves, at which stage the roots become pithy and inedible.

So – growing parsnips can be a bit of a challenge, but with planning, care and good maintenance, they are well worth the effort. Just think about that roast dinner !!



Recipes Column

Chia Pudding

Chia seeds are mini powerhouses packing more calcium than milk, more antioxidants than blueberries and more Omega-3 than Salmon.

Their texture can take a little getting used to, but they are so versatile and are a great protein-packed addition to many recipes because of their ability to thicken and gel. Delicious and healthy chia seed pudding packed with protein, Omega-3, antioxidants and calcium that you can make in under 5 minutes.

This is my modified version of the Chia Pudding recipe I found on the Wellness Mama website—for other variations goto <https://wellnessmama.com/59344/chia-seed-pudding-recipe/>

Recipe type: Breakfast or Snack

Serves: 4 servings

Ingredients

- 2—2½ cups coconut milk (or any other milk)
- ½ cup [Chia Seeds](#)
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1-2 teaspoons maple syrup (or sub any sweetener) - add sweetener to taste
- ½ cup of natural yoghurt or coconut yogurt
- ½ cup coconut cream (optional)
- 1 Banana
- Few blueberries, goji berries or other fruit
- Optional extras: cacao powder and/or muesli

Instructions

1. Soak chia seeds in the milk over night in the fridge.
2. The next morning add the vanilla and maple syrup to the chia seed mixture.
3. In a blender mix the banana and yogurt and coconut cream together. *For a quicker alternative you can do this step without the banana but it will be less sweet so you might like to add another sweetener.*
4. Spoon the chia seed mixture into 2-3 small jars and then layer with yogurt mixture. I usually do one layer of chia seed mix then a layer of yogurt then another layer of chia seed mixture.
5. Sprinkle the (optional) muesli and the fruit on top and refrigerate or eat straight away.



Top view



Side View

There are many variations of this pudding so it's worth just playing around and experiment yourself. It also tastes great if you add cacao powder to the chai seed mixture (after its been soaking) and you would need to add a little more liquid and sweetener to balance it out.

This recipe uses all natural ingredients and is not a processed food. It tastes best within two days after it is made. The ideal time to eat is the day after making it for best flavor. I prefer to make at night to have it ready the next morning.

This delicious pudding vanishes so quickly in our house that I don't know if it will last longer than 4 days. I would recommend only making the amount you plan to eat over a 2-3 day period for best flavour and freshness.

From Dorothy Coe

=====

Chocolate Mousse

A treat from **Megan Keeler...**

- ½ avocado
- ¼ cup aloe gel
- ½ papaya or mango
- ¼ cup coconut milk/cream
- 1-2 T coconut oil
- honey to taste
- 3T cacao
- 1T vanilla
- cinnamon
- mint

Process all together. Cool. Great with whipped cream.

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



HERB FARM

Michael & Sandra Nanka
 491 Springbrook Rd
 MUDGEERABA. 4213

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Useful Hints and Tips

Potting a plant – rootball ratio:

Always try to choose the right pot for the plant, and keep everything in proportion. The best container size for any plant is one that is roughly 5 cm (4 inches) deeper. After a year or so, depending on the speed of growth, you will need to re-pot the plant into a larger container.

Planting a small plant in a much larger pot is not a time-saving solution, as plants do best in pots only slightly larger than their rootball. Check regularly that the roots are not growing through the base of the pot. If they are, it is time to re-pot.

FRUIT TREES

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.

APRIL

Custard Apples: Peak harvest period. Harvest every 3 to 7 days. Watering can be tapered off. If you have not done your spraying for mealy bug, do it now. Spray individual fruit with pest oil or wipe on metho and water (30% metho & 70% water).

Figs: Taper off the water.

Lychee: Don't let trees dry out. Check for Erinose mite. Spray with wettable sulphur.

Low Chill Stone Fruit: Fertilise trees with a high organic potassium fertilizer, 50 gms per sq meter to the drip line of trees. Prune trees now – 1/3 to 1/4 of the tips can be taken off. Any inward or downward wood can be pruned.

Mango: Apply gypsum if soil pH is 6 or more. If below 6 pH, apply lime. 50 gms per sq meter of either. Continue with copper based spray for anthracnose or with 25 mls leaf microbes and 5 gms wettable sulphur per 1 litre of water.

Passion-fruit: Water can be tapered off. Harvest fallen fruit every 3-4 days.

Pawpaw: If you have not applied boron, apply now. 1 teaspoon per mature tree. 40% of annual fertiliser can be applied now to mature trees (20 grams per sq meter of a high organic potassium fertiliser).

Persimmon: Main harvest time. Declining water needs. Apply a little super-fine lime and gypsum, 20 gm of each per sq m.

Strawberries: Plants should be coming away well. A little organic potassium fertiliser can be applied now. Use fish emulsion or kelp spray regularly over plants to keep in good health. Add 20 mls molasses per litre of water + 10 mls leaf microbes.

Bananas: De-sucker plants, cutting at ground level. Cut out centre with a sharp downward motion around the circumference to the centre, forming a well. If they do not die, use 20mls of kero to the bottom of this well.

Citrus: If any scale and fungal problems still exist a further spray with pest oil and leaf microbes will be needed. Add the pest oil + 15 ml per litre of the leaf microbes. Early varieties can be picked this month.

Brisbane Organic Growers Handbook

VEGETABLES

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.

APRIL:

Asian Greens, Beans (French), Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Celery, Endive, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leek, Lettuce, Mustard Greens, Onion, Parsnip, Peas, Potato, Radish, Shallots, Silverbeet, Snow Peas, Spinach, Sweet Potato, Tomato, Turnip.

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.

HERBS

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, Up-land Cress, Winter Savoury.

APRIL

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Three Figs Café & Greenbird Gallery

- Locally made delicious food
- Big range of coffees and teas
- Old farmhouse setting
- Shady gardens and landscaping
- Handmade gifts & homewares

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For bookings phone Mirella 0419 170 654

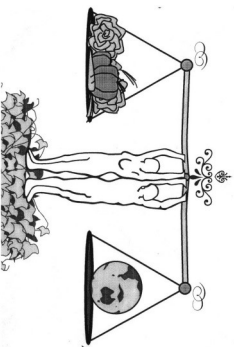
*"An enjoyable experience on so many levels
– lovely ambience, yummy food and coffee,
interesting things to see and buy.*

Don't miss it!"

G/C Visitors Guide 2013

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

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GROWERS Inc.*



NEWSLETTER

Meetings held:
3rd Thursday of the Month

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

Next meeting:
Thursday 20th April 2017