



# GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

April 2022

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## What has been happening at the Gardens

So much has happened since the last report. When it concerns the Gardens, it's all excitement, but Mother Nature has had other ideas with the devastating floods. Our hearts go out to those who have been affected. Australia is definitely a land of extremes.

Work has just resumed at the Gardens as our Landscapers, Trevor and Carmen, were badly affected by the floods themselves. The pathway washouts have been repaired, the retaining wall behind the large tank has been replaced and work has commenced on the Disability Accessible Garden.

The Council have donated a variety of new tools to us, which we appreciate very much. They have been very supportive of the Gardens.

The Open Days for Parks Week were not as successful as they have been in the past. On two out of the three days it was raining which kept people away. On the final day we were kept busy with many visitors. There is so much interest in gardening, growing our own food and knowing where our food comes from. As a result of the Open Days, some new members have joined us and we give them a warm welcome. With the renewed interest in the Gardens we are running out of plots to hire.

After the rain the mosquitoes have become very prolific, so please cover up to protect yourself. There is repellent in the shed if needed.

It was decided at the last meeting that the propagation shed should be moved and used again for propagating instead of storage. So, if you are interested in seed raising, please use the little shed.

As you are all aware the nut grass in the new dump area is out of control. We had a few responses to the call for solutions to this problem. We will keep you updated on the results.

The Committee voted "Yes" for us to hold a workshop on 'Fruit Tree Pruning'. It will be run by Peter McQueen. Peter is currently teaching at TAFE and has done so for many years. He was also recommended to us by Brian Sams. Numbers are limited and the first to register will secure a booking. Keep a lookout on Facebook and for the signup sheet in the shed.

We all look forward to our morning tea on social days to catch up with friends, the chatter, laughter, sharing ideas and problem solving is what a Community Garden is all about.

COVID is still prevalent, so please stay safe.

Take care, see you soon.

Joanne, President



<https://www.instagram.com/tcogainc/>



TOOWOOMBA  
community  
ORGANIC GARDENS

## Bad Beetles

I planted some eggplant seedlings only to find **every** leaf full of tiny holes and a tiny shiny beetle on every leaf. These are metallic flea beetles. Certain species of the adult flea beetle are fond of cabbages, Brussels sprouts, swede and other brassicas; some like potatoes; others are equally fond of wallflowers, alyssum, aubrieta and nasturtiums. These beetles do not like it wet, so frequent watering or misting of the foliage will help keep them away.

And it is not just the adults, as the larvae can also cause problems. They feed on the root systems of the plants concerned, so if the plant is wilting as well as suffering from holed leaves, look underground. It is too late for my seedlings but next time I plant some I will watch out for this beetle and spray them with Neem.



## What to Plant in April

### Herbs

Alfalfa/Lucerne	Dandelion	
Angelica	Dill	
Anise/Hyssop	Endive	Nasturtium
Borage	Evening Primrose	Oregano
Buckwheat	Fennel	Parsley
Calendula	Fenugreek	Salad Burnett
Catnip	Feverfew	Salad Rocket
Camomile	Linseed	Sage
Chervil	Lupin	Thyme
Chickory	Marjoram	Vetch
Coriander	Mustard	Watercress

Artichoke
Asian Greens
Beetroot
Broad Beans
Broccoli



**Chicory**

### Vegetables

Brussels Sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celeriac
Celery
Chickpea
Daikon
Garlic
Kale
Kohl Rabi
Leeks

Lettuce	Rhubarb
Mizuna	Salsify
Onions	Shallots
Parsnip	Silverbeet
Peas—	Spinach
Climbing & Dwarf	Spring Onion
Potato	Swedes
Radish	Turnip

Swede



## Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes (*Ipomoea batatas*) are believed to be native to the West Indies, but were also found in Indonesia and the Philippines by early explorers.

The plants are perennial trailing vines that cover the ground with a lush canopy that smothers weeds. They are susceptible to frost, so like to be grown in a warm climate. They need a growing season of about six months and like a soil that is light and enriched with well-rotted organic matter.

Start the plants from cuttings taken in late winter or early spring. You can grow your own by putting suitable sweet potatoes into a box of moist sand in late winter or early spring and keeping it in a warm position until shoots about 15 cm long develop from the tubers. They are then pulled carefully from the parent tuber and planted 30-40 cm apart in rows and 60-75 cm between rows in a raised bed. This ensures good drainage and easy harvesting. Keep plants well watered as they grow. No extra fertiliser should be required, especially fertiliser that is high in nitrogen which will promote leaf growth at the expense of tubers.



As the vines grow, lift the runners periodically to discourage them from taking root, as this will restrict development of the main crop of the parent plant.



Harvesting—If you can, leave the tubers in the ground until the leaves turn yellow and start to die down, but ensure that they are lifted before frost, as this will damage the tubers and make them unable to be stored successfully. A firm skin indicates that the tubers are mature. They should not exude a milky sap when cut. Leave the tubers on top of the soil in heaps for six or seven days to cure if the weather is warm, covering with sacks or plastic at night. Store in a dry warm place where the temperature doesn't fall below 10 degrees C.

Health benefits—All sweet potatoes are rich in antioxidants, high in vitamin C and E, potassium and iron and the orange ones are also rich in carotenes. A delicious health treat!

## Quick Notes for Your Calendar

### Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 April—Wondai Autumn Garden Expo

Wondai Sportsground & Lions Pavilion, Bunya Highway, Wondai

Enjoy a traditional horticultural show plus quality stalls of every description for garden, home and personal well-being. All in the beautiful country setting of Wondai in the South Burnett Region.

Guest speakers will be presenting on both days - check the [Facebook page](#) for latest information.

[wondaigardenexpo.com](http://wondaigardenexpo.com)

### Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 April—Montville Open Gardens & Plant Stalls

"The Shambles", 85 Western Avenue, Montville

"Lower Woontooba", 238 western Avenue, Montville

"Wongawilli", 19 Manley Drive, Montville

Three very contrasting, large country gardens in their beautiful borrowed landscapes

Refreshments at "Rising Scone Cafe at "The Shambles".

Plants of all sorts for sale. Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th April 2022, 9am to 4pm.

Entry \$10 to each garden, cash only please. Children free.

Funds raised for Cittamani Hospice ([www.cittamanihospice.com.au](http://www.cittamanihospice.com.au)).

More information: [www.montvillegarden.com](http://www.montvillegarden.com) or [facebook.com/montvillegarden](https://facebook.com/montvillegarden)

### 1-7 May—Compost Awareness Week

Online Worm Farming Workshop on 2 May 22

[compostweek.com.au](http://compostweek.com.au)

### Saturday 4 June 2022 - Ipswich Garden & Plant Fair - 9am-2pm

Plant sales, garden products, food.

[facebook.com/ipswichgardenandplantfair](https://facebook.com/ipswichgardenandplantfair)

## Pork Chops with Tamarillo Sauce

With Tamarillos this year being in plentiful supply people may be looking for ways to use them other than as fresh fruit. They can be made into a pie, spiced to serve with cold meats, made into chutney or made into a sauce to serve with hot dishes or meats.

### Ingredients

6 pork chops  
Salt and pepper  
**Tamarillo Sauce**  
6 tamarillos  
Boiling water  
1 onion  
1 capsicum  
2 tablespoons oil  
3 tablespoons  
water  
3 tablespoons  
brown sugar



### Method

1. Trim any excess fat from the pork chops and season them with salt and pepper. Place in a cold frying pan with no added oil. Heat slowly and when hot, cook the pork chops over a medium heat for 30 minutes, or until done. While pork chops are cooking prepare the sauce.

### Tamarillo Sauce

1. Drop the tamarillos into boiling water and leave to stand for 1-2 minutes. Drain, cool and peel off skins. Cut into thin slices.
2. Peel and chop the onion finely
3. Deseed and finely chop the capsicum.
4. Heat the oil in a saucepan and add the onion and capsicum. Fry quickly for 2 minutes. Add the water, brown sugar and sliced tamarillos.
5. Bring to the boil, stirring all the time and simmer gently for 10 minutes
6. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
7. Serve with pork chops, or other meat, or as a garnish on savoury pies or vegetable bakes.

- *New Zealand the Beautiful Cookbook*,  
Edited by Tui Flower

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### 2021—2022 COMMITTEE

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Past Newsletters [Link](#)

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