



# GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

April 2019

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## SOCIAL GARDENING

Wednesdays 8.30-11.00am

Come along and join in the fun!

Sundays 8.30-11.00am

All Members & Visitors Welcome

## The Positives of Being a Member of "The Gardens"

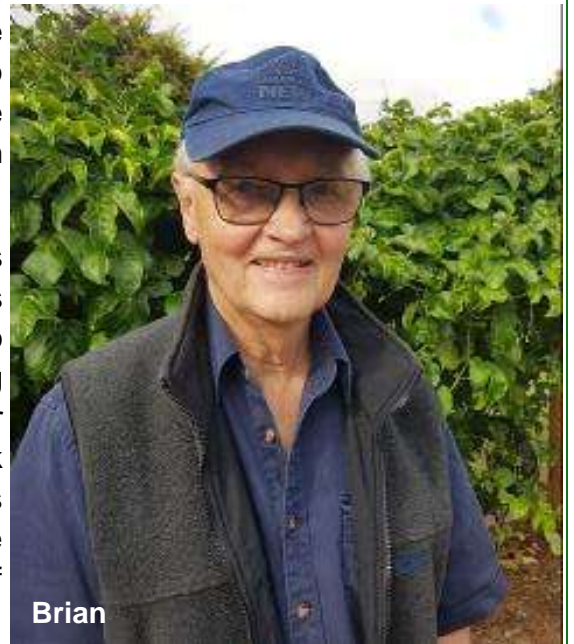
Our Organic Community Garden is home to people from many backgrounds and different ethnic groups. It offers us an opportunity to learn more about gardening, through observation and sharing of ideas. This sets us apart from just "messaging around" in our home garden. There are many positives in being part of such a community.

We owe a debt of gratitude to those who started this garden, for it is through their vision that we have such a legacy today. The permaculture area with its mature fruit and nut trees is such an example. The council also deserves praise for granting us the land in the first place and for its on-going support.

Another positive is the sharing of ideas and surplus produce over a morning cuppa with tasty treats to boot. These ideas invariably get chewed over by our committee, the driving force of our community.

Those of us lucky enough to hire a community plot can and do experiment with different types of veggies as well as old favourites. Traditional terracotta pots and wicking beds in the eastern garden show how positive steps can be taken to save water. Both use capillary action to lift water to the surface. Given that the climate is changing, more such ideas will be needed in future.

The community garden serves as a focal point for workshops and open days. It has also proved invaluable in raising awareness of horticulture for students from the Clifford Park Special School. It was gratifying to see them graduate with certificates at the end of last year.



Brian

We have a right to be proud of where we've been and where we're headed. With such positivity from members, we can't help but succeed in the future.

- Brian



## What's Happening at The Gardens

Autumn in the garden.

Finally, rain, wonderful rain. Now is the time to get into the garden and prepare the vegetable patch for the winter to spring vegetables. Clear out the finished summer plants and clear and dig out weeds and grass and put them into the compost bin. Top up garden beds with compost and manure and dig it all in well. While the weather is damp and cool and the soil still has some warmth is the perfect time to put in seedlings, such as broccoli, kale, cabbage, peas, lettuce, bok choy and some fresh herb plants.

Pop in a row or two of beetroot seed and some carrot seed. These are planted very shallow and I find that a better strike of seed is accomplished by gently patting down the soil surface so that the seed is in good contact with the soil. Carrots need to be kept moist, so covering with hessian, or shade cloth until the seed has germinated will give good results.

In the flower garden now is the time to put in sweet pea seeds and make your choice of spring bulbs. If you put your spring bulbs into the vegetable crisper in the fridge for about a month and give them a "winter chill"

before planting, it should give better results; but make sure they have good ventilation, or they could rot, and don't forget them!

Pansy and viola seedlings are now appearing in the nursery and look beautiful when combined with spring flowering bulbs; with a trellis of sweetly perfumed sweet pea and it's a gardener's heaven.

Happy gardening from Jeanette.

### Vegetable Seedlings for Sale at TCOG

Contact Jeanette at The Gardens

All proceeds go to

The Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens.

#### Herbs

Alfalfa/Lucerne	Endive
Angelica	Evening
Anise/Hyssop	Primrose
Borage	Fennel
Buckwheat	Fenugreek
Calendula	Feverfew
Catnip,	Linseed
Camomile	Lupin
Chervil	Marjoram
Chickory	Mustard
Coriander	Nasturtium
Dandelion	Oregano,
Dill	Parsley

#### What to Plant in April



Salad Burnett  
Salad Rocket  
Sage  
Thyme  
Vetch  
Watercress

Artichoke  
Asian Greens  
Beetroot  
Broad Beans  
Broccoli  
Brussels  
Sprouts  
Cabbage  
Carrots  
Cauliflower

#### Vegetables

Celeriac  
Celery  
Chickpea  
Daikon  
Garlic  
Kale  
Kohl Rabi  
Leeks  
Lettuce  
Mizuna

Onions  
Parsnip  
P e a s —  
Climbing &  
Dwarf  
Radish  
Rhubarb

Salsify  
Shallots  
Silverbeet  
Spinach  
S p r i n g  
Onion  
Swedes  
Turnip



Toowoomba Mower  
Centre  
Supplying & Servicing

Toowoomba Mower  
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## Rotate Your Crops

The core principle of crop rotation is to avoid following one crop with another crop from the same family. Rotating crops discourages disease and prevents the build-up of many pests that sometimes beset the vegetable grower. Rotation also allows soil fertility and soil structure to be preserved while maintaining high production.

While the emphasis should be on disease control, we can also rotate crops with fibrous roots and crops with deep roots (carrots follow lettuce); very leafy and bulky crops with crops that have less foliage; crops with other soil health benefits (such as the production of allelopathic residues) with disease susceptible crops (for example Tagetes marigold before tomato); and competitive crops with less competitive crops.

### Maintain plant health by alternating nutrient demand

Different plant types make different demands upon nutrients in the soil. For instance, leafy green vegetables require a lot of nitrogen to produce their foliage, but root crops have a much lower nitrogen requirement. Growing the same crop continuously in the same place in the garden will eventually result in nutrient deficiencies in the plants, unless suitable fertiliser is applied.

### Rotation in practice

There are many different crop rotation designs to be found and no single plan is suitable for every situation. However, they all apply the same general rules of rotation.

Some gardening books promote a single template for rotation but in fact rotation designs can be quite flexible and should allow for personal choice, seasonal opportunity, or crop failure and the inevitable busy schedule that causes us to miss time-consuming tasks in the garden.

### Three-year rotation

In a typical three-year rotation, pulses and salad crops are grown in the first year, followed by brassica crops in the second year and root crops in the third year. Different beds will be at various stages in the rotation so that all crops may be produced in a single year.

#### A. *Pulses and salad crops*

Sweetcorn at rear, rows of runner beans, tomatoes, peas, onion, broad beans, leek, chard, lettuce, spinach, cucumber, endive, marrow, celery, shallot

#### B. *Brassicas*

Brussels sprouts, kale, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, collards

#### C. *Root crops*

Potato, turnip, beet, carrot, swede, parsnip, kohlrabi.

Brassicas are heavy feeding plants so it is at this point in the rotation that the heaviest manure occurs. Root crops are less heavy feeders and they are grown after the brassicas. Pulses fix nitrogen so they are grown at the end of the cycle in order to rebuild the soil fertility before the cycle starts again.

- The New Organic Gardener by Tim Marshall



## Quick Notes for Your Calendar

### Pine Rivers Garden and Plant Fair—Saturday & Sunday 27 & 28 April

Lawnton Show Ground, 757 Gympie Road, Lawnton

[www.pineriversgardenandplantfair.com.au](http://www.pineriversgardenandplantfair.com.au)

### International Compost Awareness Week Australia—5-11 May

Visit the calendar at [www.compostweek.com.au/events](http://www.compostweek.com.au/events) to check for associated events or activities

### Herb Awareness—Sunday 26 May

Albion Peace Hall, 102 McDonald Road, Windsor

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

### Queensland Garden Expo—Friday 12 to Sunday 14 July (Qld's Premier Gardening Event)

Nambour Showgrounds, Nambour, Sunshine Coast

**Early Bird Tickets are now on sale from the website**

[www.qldgardenexpo.com.au](http://www.qldgardenexpo.com.au)

## Onions a la Grecque

This is a very mellow way of eating onions and parsley with the added bonus of garlic and lemon. To balance the oil in the dish, serve it with bread.

Health benefits may include beneficial for respiratory infections, circulation and heart health.

This same recipe can be used to make Fennel a la Grecque by replacing the onions with 2 large fennel bulbs cut into 1cm wide segments from the top to the base. Cook for 15 minutes.

### Ingredients

**1 Lemon plus 4 tsp lemon juice**

**100 ml water**

**4 tbsp olive oil**

**3 tbsp dry white wine**

**1 clove garlic halved** (optional)

**1/2 tsp crushed coriander seeds**

**1/2 tsp peppercorns** any colour

**1 bay leaf**

**500g pickling onions and/or shallots**  
(preferably red skinned)

**Sea salt**

**15g chopped fresh parsley**

### Method

1. Cut the lemon into 4 thick slices, then cut each slice in half. Remove any pips
2. In a saucepan add the water, oil, wine, half-slices of lemon, 4 teaspoons lemon juice, garlic if using, coriander seeds, peppercorns and the bay leaf. Bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes
3. Add the onions. Return to the boil, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally for about 20 minutes until the onions are tender but not flabby.
4. Remove the onions and lemon slices with a slotted spoon and place them in a serving dish.
5. Boil the liquid uncovered until it is reduced to about half. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Pour over the onions and lemons and allow to cool. Serve warm or cold thickly strewn with the chopped parsley and accompanied by wholegrain bread.



2018—2019 COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: Andrew Hawke

VICE PRESIDENT: Vacant

SECRETARY: Mike Knight—[tcoga.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:tcoga.secretary@gmail.com)

TREASURER: Sharon Wendt—[tcoga.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:tcoga.treasurer@gmail.com)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Oliver Rook, Jane Knight, Chris Walpole

#### Coordinating Volunteers

Garden Plot Coordinator: Joanne McClelland

New Member Coordinator: Joanne McClelland

Grants Coordinators: Linda Mangubhai & Sharon Wendt

Communications & Marketing Coordinator: Oliver Rook

Newsletter Editor: Carlene Gardiner

Project Coordinators: Andrew Hawke & Jeanette

Newsletter of Toowoomba  
Community Organic Gardens  
Association Inc.

22A Goggs Street  
TOOWOOMBA CITY QLD 4350

[tcoga.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:tcoga.newsletter@gmail.com)