



GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

December 2020

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What Has Been Happening at The Gardens

2020 has certainly provided all of us with many challenges and I think it is fair to say that we are all looking forward to ushering in 2021. COVID-19 has also impacted everything including our little community garden.

Despite some of the difficulties we have still managed to make significant improvements to the gardens. Many members of the public who walk through the gardens have commented on the progress that has been made this year.

In the last few months of the year we have also held:

- A successful Open Day as part of the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers
- Spring in the Gardens Planning Session
- Two Working Bees
- Future Directions of The Gardens Planning Session and Pizza Oven Lunch

The amount of produce which has been available for members at the Share Table which was grown in members' plots and in the community gardens areas, has been considerable this year. It's the most affordable way to access fresh and nutritious fruit and vegetables in Toowoomba.

None of this would have been possible without the support of members who selflessly give up their time to work in the community areas of the gardens. On behalf of the committee we sincerely thank all of you for your efforts.

I encourage all of you to come along when you can to the Social Gardening Sessions on a Wednesday and a Sunday morning. This is a great way to get to know members of the community garden and share ideas and knowledge and just have a good old chit chat. Given the fact that summer is upon us and things are heating up we are meeting and leaving the gardens a little earlier. Some of our early risers get to the gardens very early and we are having morning tea at 10am now so that we can be heading out of the gardens by 11am to avoid the heat.

Social Gathering sessions will still be on during the holidays for those members who are not going away. For those Plot Holders who are planning on going away if you let us know we will arrange for one of the members to water your plot in your absence.

I hope that all of our members get a chance to relax and spend time with family and loved ones over the festive season. On behalf of the TCOGA Committee I would like to wish all of our members a safe and happy festive season and all the best for 2021.

See you in the gardens.

Wendy Snigg

President
TCOGA



TOOWOOMBA
community
ORGANIC GARDENS



Healthy Food for the Hot Weather

As Christmas approaches and we start to plan the all-important food schedule for the special days and for when visitors are dropping in, it may be time to think about how we can use fresh produce to keep ourselves and our guests well fed, but healthier.

In summer we have such wonderful fresh fruit and salad vegetables available that it's easy to incorporate them into our menus. Recently a lady showed me a photo of a beautiful "fruit cake" that she had made to share with a group of special friends who were coming for lunch. It was built along the same principles as the photo, but she artistically had fruit cascading down the side. Maybe this could appeal to children and encourage them to eat more fruit.



Snack times could incorporate such morsels as Bruschetta using the tomatoes, basil and oregano you have grown in your garden. All you need then is a sliced French loaf of bread, good quality olive oil, balsamic vinegar and a garlic clove. Slice the bread, rub the cut garlic clove over both sides, drizzle or brush both sides with olive oil then toast the bread and top with diced tomato which has been mixed with olive oil, a dash of balsamic vinegar, sliced basil leaves, dried or fresh oregano and some salt.

Instead of serving up a carbohydrate heavy salad, consider using a Chinese cabbage or Wombok to make a crunchy Wombok Salad. This is milder than ordinary cabbage and delicious. The combination is half a Wombok, a packet of fried noodles, 6 spring onions from your garden, 100g toasted slivered almonds, or less of toasted pine nuts), 1/4 c white vinegar, 1 tsp caster sugar, 1 tbsp soy sauce, 2 tsp sesame oil, 1/2 cup olive oil. Mix the dressing together ensuring the sugar has dissolved. Slice the Wombok and the spring onions thinly, mix through the dressing, toasted almonds or pine nuts and fried noodles just before serving. Serves 4.



Baked Kale chips are a low calorie, nutritious snack and kale grows well at The Gardens. Take one bunch of kale, 1 tbs olive oil and 1 tsp seasoned salt. Preheat the oven to 175 degrees C and line a biscuit tray with baking paper. Remove the stalks from the kale and wash. Dry thoroughly and rip into bite-sized pieces. Coat with the oil and sprinkle with salt. Bake until the edges are brown but not burnt, 10—15 minutes.

I hope this gives you some ideas for entertaining and just being healthier this summer using your own produce wherever possible. Bon appetite!

-Carlene

Quick Notes for Your Calendar

TCOGA Meeting at The Gardens—Saturday 5 December 10.00am

Saturday & Sunday 13 & 14 March 2021—Brisbane Garden & Plant Expo – Rocklea Showgrounds

www.plantexpo.com.au

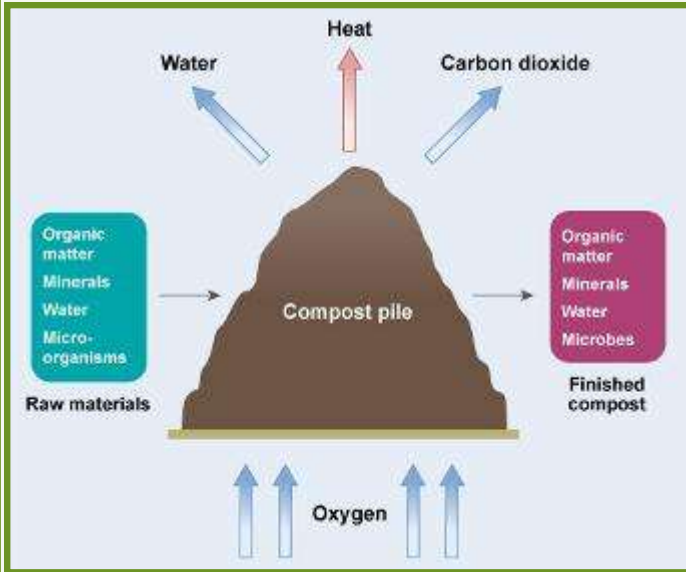
Saturday & Sunday 15 & 16 May 2021—Pine Rivers Garden and Plant Fair—Pine Rivers Show Ring,

757 Gympie Road, Lawnton pineriversgardenandplantfair.com.au

9—1 July 2021—Queensland Garden Expo— Nambour

www.qldgardenexpo.com.au

The Law of Conservation of Mass, and Composting as an Example of its Application



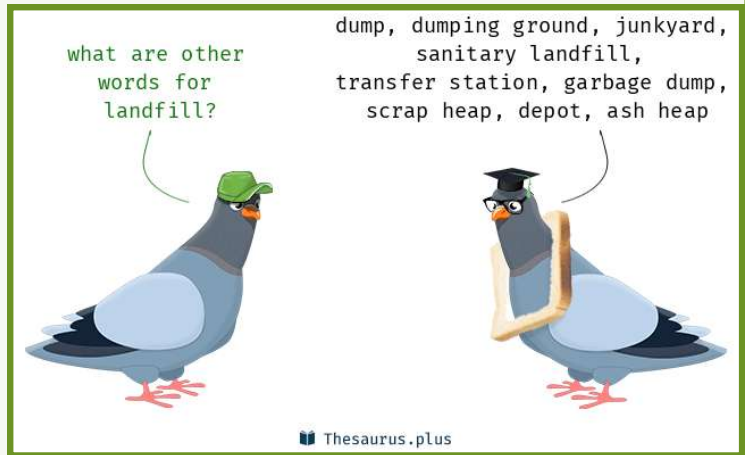
In about 1785, the French chemist Antoine-Laurent de Lavoisier discovered the **Law of Conservation of Mass** (or **Matter**), which states that mass is neither created nor destroyed by chemical reactions or physical transformations. According to this law, the total mass of the products in a chemical reaction must equal the total mass of the reactants.

Composting is the natural extrapolation of this law whereby the raw materials that we introduce into the system are transformed into a rich source of nutrients to be used directly on our plants. In the process, water, CO₂ and heat are also outputs of this process.

The purpose of this article is not to explain the composting, Bokashi or worm farming techniques used to transform the organic waste into nutrients, but instead to highlight the benefits of reducing the volume of organic materials sent to landfills (half of the garbage produced in a house is organic waste; when this breaks down in landfill, it produces greenhouse gases). The benefits include transforming the organic waste, and returning the final product back to the soil from where all the things come; improving the soil structure and nutrient levels; and keeping the soil moisture and saving water. Crucially, we do not need to use chemical fertilisers.

If you want to start to produce your own compost in your backyard, please remember that there are regulations to follow. Find advice either in your local community garden or from the city council, or alternatively consult an expert. Bokashi is an option for small households.

You can still compost if you cannot make it on your property.



There are options available such as

community composting hubs, private compost services (where available) and municipal compost services. If none of the above are available in your community, then it is time for a group of volunteers committed to the environment to take the first step.

Whichever option you choose, please keep in mind that it is important to **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle** because the environment also matters.





The Flowering Gum Tree in the Driveway



*Have a safe and
Happy Christmas
and
Best Wishes for 2021*

2021 Membership Fees and Renewal Membership Fees

Social, Ordinary and Associate classes will be \$30 per year. (A discount will be offered to a couple and/or families of \$40 per household.)

There will be no increase to the cost of annual plot hire.

All members will need to fill out a new membership form to complete the renewal process and maintain their TCOGA membership.

Membership Forms and Invoices will be emailed out to members in the last week of January. Payment will need to be received on or by Friday 26 February 2020

If you require any further information or clarification around this, please do not hesitate to contact the committee.

What to Plant in December

Herbs

- Alfalfa
- Amaranth
- Basil
- Borage
- Burdock
- Carraway
- Chives
- Echinacea
- French Tarragon
- Lemon Balm
- Marigold
- Marjoram
- Oregano

- Parsley
- Purslane
- Sage
- Purslane
- Sunflower
- Thyme



Sunflower

Vegetables

- Beans—Climbing,
Dwarf & Snake
- Beetroot
- Broccoli Seedlings
- Cabbage Seedlings
- Cape Gooseberry
- Capsicum
- Carrots
- Celery
- Celeriac
- Chilli Peppers
- Choko
- Cucumber
- Lettuce
- Eggplant

- Kohl Rabi
- Leek Seedlings
- Marrow
- Mustard Greens
- Okra
- Pumpkin
- Radish
- Rockmelon
- Rosella
- Silverbeet
- Squash
- Sweetcorn
- Tomatillo Seedlings
- Tomato
- Turnip



Rosella

- Watermelon
- Zucchini



Okra

Ricotta and Almond Cake (Gluten Free)

Linda cooked this beautiful cake for everyone to enjoy at the end of the Working Bee on this Sunday just gone. It was so delicious that there were only two pieces left to photograph when I asked her for the recipe!

Ingredients

- 400g ricotta cheese
- 3 eggs (beaten)
- 1/4 cup lemon zest (or orange)
- 2 cups almond meal
- 3/4 cup castor sugar (or less if preferred)

Method

1. Grease and line a 20cm tin.
2. Beat all the ingredients together and add to the tin.
3. Cover with flaked almonds.
4. Bake for 50-60 minutes at 160 degrees C.

Enjoy



Toowoomba Mower
Centre
Supplying & Servicing



Toowoomba Mower
Centre
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2020—2021 COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: Wendy Snigg

VICE PRESIDENT: Vacant

SECRETARY: Jeanette Walton—tcoga.secretary@gmail.com

TREASURER: Kate Eglitis —tcoga.treasurer@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Joanne McClelland, Emilio Anteliz and Helen Dunne

Newsletter Editor: Carlene Gardiner—tcoga.newsletter@gmail.com

Newsletter of Toowoomba
Community Organic Gardens
Association Inc.

22A Goggs Street

TOOWOOMBA CITY QLD 4350

tcoga.newsletter@gmail.com

Past Newsletters [Link](#)

<https://tcogardens.wordpress.com/newsletters/>