



# NEWSLETTER

March 2023

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## What has been Happening in February

I sit to write this article each month and I am surprised by the number of projects that members are involved in. It has made so much difference to the Gardens.

The place is looking good. If there is something or somewhere you are interested to work on, talk to a committee member and we will help you make things happen.

### **Date Claimers**

Next workshop "retrosurburia" -Saturday March 11th . Book on Eventbrite.

Introduction to Mushrooms - April 2 nd . More details to follow.

Open Days-Sundays and Wednesday - 5 th , 8 th ,12 th March.

Bunnings Sausage Sizzle-16 th April. Sorry I gave you the wrong date last time. Cherie has taken over the role of interim Treasurer. Lots to learn and Lyndell is guiding her through it all. Well done and thank you.

We had a very good attendance at the Permaculture Workshop led by Sara Hammer.

Understanding the principles and ethics of permaculture is the first step in achieving your goals in your garden at home. It is also a very good introduction to the next workshop "Retrosurburia".

We are still working on the Bush Food / Native area. Thankfully the Council has dropped the mulch closer to where we want it. All hands on deck.

The Clubhouse has never looked so good. Thanks to Nettie and George for getting it all organised. Many thanks to the Toowoomba West Men's Shed for making the table and donating some tools for the Tool Workshop. TBA.

Tim has just completed a Grant to restore the six garden beds along the fence in the members area and the bays for the mulch near the carpark to be built. It's all very exciting, fingers crossed we get the grant. Thank you, Tim, Ashleigh and Bella.

Some members might have noticed the Colourful signs in and around the Gardens which were done at the painting gathering. There will be more painting days in the future. It was a lot of fun. Some of the signs will be sold at the Open Day.

The worm farms have been moved. The shelf is full of borage, worm and comfrey teas for plot holders to use in their gardens. Help yourselves.

There are still raffle tickets available. First prize is a garden pack donated by "The Springs Garden World". Second prize is a snuggly knee rug. Good luck to everyone. The raffle will be drawn on the last open day.

We, as an Association, have to abide by rules set by the Office of Fair Trading, as well as the TRC. Kylie, Nettie and Sue have gone through them all and after countless hours, have reviewed and updated the Rules of the Association, revised the existing Members Handbook, expanded on the Code of Conduct and developed a Management Plan and Grievance Policy. Life for the Committee will be so much easier and a clearer understanding for members of what their requirements are.

It is that time of year again, Membership renewals are due. Membership forms have been sent to existing members. Please let Kylie know if you didn't receive it. You have until 31 March to provide your payment. We will use this information to update our records as this is another requirement of the Office of Fair Trading.

Stay safe and well. See you at the garden.

Regards,

Joanne.



# March

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<p>Apple pyo and strawberry pyo @ eastern colour still on this month weekends \$4 a kilo for galas \$14 a kilo for strawberries</p> 			1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b> <b>National Palm and Cycad show</b> 3rd-5th march, 9am-4pm, Mount Coot-tha Botanical gardens	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b> <b>-Growing Caladiums workshop</b> , 1.30-3.30pm Holland park library <b>-Cobb and co farmers Markets</b> Lindsay st <b>-Plant warehouse sale</b> Carrara markets 4th-5th march 8am-2pm Gooding drive, carrara <b>-Millmerran Show</b> 4-5th
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b> <b>PCYC Markets:</b> Near the TCOGA gardens	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Toowoomba gardens and Stanthorpe wines 2 day tour</b> with eventbrite, Maryland st, stanthorpe	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>10<sup>th</sup></b> - <b>Pittsworth Show 10th-11th March</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup></b> <b>-Retrosuburbia gardens</b> <b>-Beaudesert Districts Orchid and foliage society autumn show</b> 11th-12th march, 8-3 sat, 9-2 sun, Canungra school of arts, pine street <b>West brisbane Orchid society autumn show</b> 11th-12 march, Mount coot-tha botanical gardens <b>-Cobb &amp; co Markets</b>
<b>12<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Brisbane Garden and plant expo-</b> Rocklea showgrounds <b>PCYC Markets</b>	13 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>15<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Great Aussie Composting Roadshow-</b> Hume St, Pittsworth QLD	16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>17<sup>th</sup></b> <b>St.Patricks Day</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup></b> <b>-Queensland Dahlia society 2023 annual state show</b> 18th-19th march Mount Coot-tha botanical gardens <b>-Cobb and co Markets</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup></b> <b>PCYC Markets:</b> Near the TCOGA gardens & <b>Queens park markets</b> , Toowoomba	20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>21<sup>st</sup></b> <b>Pohlmans nursery tour</b> 8.30am-4.30pm by discovery coaches 12/8 hume st, nrth toowoomba	22 <sup>nd</sup>	23 <sup>rd</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>25<sup>th</sup></b> <b>-Cobb and co farmers Markets</b>
<b>26<sup>th</sup></b> <b>PCYC Markets</b>  <b>Cabarlah Markets</b>	27 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>	29 <sup>th</sup>	30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>31<sup>st</sup></b> <b>Toowoomba royal show -til the 1st March-</b> holiday	



## No Till Gardening or Lasagne Gardening

Lasagne gardening is one of the many names this method is known by, to enable no-dig, no-till, organic gardening that allows us to create a rich soil. It is a garden that is created on top of the existing ground. No-dig gardening was developed by gardening pioneer Masanobu Fukuoka in Japan in the 1930s, before being brought to Australia in the 1970s by Esther Deans, OAM, poet, writer, gardener and conservationist.

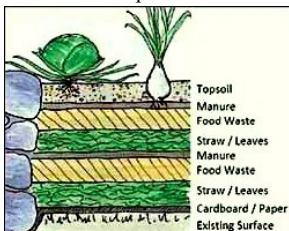
Even though tilling is used to improve the soil quality, it also has more negative than positive effects such as destroying living things and the continuous practise of this activity changes the natural porosity of the soil, and in consequence we have compaction, erosion and increasing water evaporation. By contrast, "lasagne gardening" builds gardens by "adding layers of organic materials that will 'cook down' over time, resulting in nutrient-rich soil that will help your plants thrive. Also known as sheet composting, lasagne gardening is beneficial for the environment because you're turning yard waste, kitchen scraps, and anything else you'd add to a normal compost pile into organic fertilizer to grow new plants" (<https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-make-alasagne-garden-2539877>).

To make the compost lasagne style, it is necessary to have materials rich in carbon as wood and paper or cardboard and also materials rich in nitrogen

such as green leaves and manure. This is a homemade simulation of how soil is created in nature with different layers of materials and at the end, transforming these materials into a rich soil ready to grow vegetables or flowers.

This method consists of placing several layers of cardboard and/or thick newspaper (not shredded), on the ground, being sure to overlap the edges. Over this, add a layer of leaves or twigs (brown material), as this will help to break down the cardboard/newspaper quickly. (Browns include leaves, pine needles, peat and shredded newspaper). Then add a layer of greens or compost, (vegetable scraps, disease- and seed-free garden clippings or weeds, grass clippings or coffee grounds). You can create multiple layers of this composition to your desired height. Finish off the bed with topsoil. Sprinkle each layer with water as you build the bed. Top the bed with a thick layer of mulch, straw, dead plant material or wood chips. Your layered garden will shrink in height as it decomposes. Just add more brown, green and compost layers annually. This is a brief description of the method; more information can be found online or at your local organic garden. This is a low-cost technique with excellent results and minimum equipment. To be able to complete this project, all you need is the ability to bend and use a shovel. You can make a lasagne garden at any time of the year.

However, autumn is the optimum time for many gardeners because of the number of organic materials available—fallen leaves, waste from garden clean-up, etc. You can let the lasagne garden sit and break down all winter. By spring, it should be ready to plant. One final word of advice from Esther Deans' book: "One of the most important things about the 'no-dig' garden is just that – don't dig it! Digging a no-dig garden can spoil the wonderful work that Nature is doing for you – earthworms will be cultivating the soil, and they do not like to be disturbed, so let them work in peace."



## Growing Zucchini vertically



This year I have tried something different: to grow zucchinis taking much less space in the garden. First choose a sunny spot with well fertilised soil and put in a strong stake that will support the plant through its growing season. This will cause less disturbance to the root system as the plant grows.

Either plant a seed next to the stake or plant a seedling and water in well to start it off.

Once the plant starts to grow, loosely tie the stem to the stake under a set of leaves. Check on it every day to see if it needs tying up higher and cut off the leaves at the bottom so that the nutrients go to the new growth at the top.

This allows you to see the fruit developing or ready to pick and you won't have problems with powdery mildew as you can remove these leaves when you see them.

Why not try it now while we can still plant new zucchini seedlings during the summer.

-Carrie



# *What to Plant in March*



Beans-Climbing, Dwarf & Snake  
 Beetroot  
 Bok Choy  
 Broad Beans  
 Broccoli  
 Brussels Sprouts  
 Cabbage  
 Catnip  
 Carrots  
 Cauliflower  
 Celeriac  
 Celery  
 Chickory  
 Chickpea  
 Coriander  
 Dandelion  
 Dill  
 Feverfew  
 Florence Fennel  
 Garlic  
 Kale  
 Kohl Rabi  
 Leeks

Lemon Balm  
 Lettuce  
 Mandevillas  
 Marjoram  
 Onions  
 Oregano  
 Parsley  
 Parsnip  
 Pea-Climbing and Dwarf  
 Radish  
 Rhubarb  
 Sage  
 Salad Burnett  
 Salad Rocket  
 Salsify  
 Shallots  
 Silverbeet  
 Spinach  
 Swedes  
 Thyme  
 Turnip  
 Vetch  
 Watercress

**What to look for Harvesting (Toowoomba -darling downs) approximate:**  
 Avocado  
 Apples  
 Beans  
 Beetroot  
 Cucumbers  
 Capsicum  
 Carrots  
 Chickpeas  
 Chilli  
 Corn  
 Cotton  
 Eggplant  
 Figs  
 Grapes  
 Lettuce  
 Melons  
 Onions  
 Pears  
 Pomegranates  
 Pumpkins  
 Raspberries  
 Stone fruits  
 Strawberries  
 Sunflowers  
 Sweet Potato  
 Tomatoes  
 Zucchini  
 Watermelons

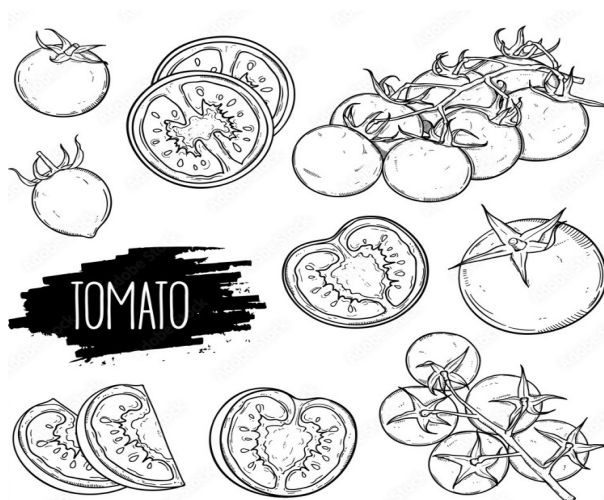
# Recipe of the Month - Cherry Tomato Relish

## INGREDIENTS

- 1.5kg vine-ripened cherry tomatoes or any harvested tomatoes
- 4 onions chopped (any onions harvested)
  - 1 Tbsp salt
- 2 cups (500ml) vinegar
- 2 cups of sugar (raw or brown)
  - 2 Tbsp cornflour
  - 1 Tbsp mustard seeds
  - 1 Tbsp cumin
  - 1 Tbsp paprika
  - 1 Tbsp turmeric
- 1 Tbsp finely diced herbs
- 1 Tbsp chilli chopped or powdered (optional)



It's tomato harvest season and now is the time to preserve them for you to enjoy during the winter, other preservation methods include drying to make semi-dried tomatoes preserved in oil or homemade tomato sauce.



## Step 1

Place the tomato and onion in a bowl. Cover with salt and stand overnight at room temperature. If using large tomatoes like gourmets they will need to be peeled. To peel tomatoes, score a cross in the base, then cover with boiling water for 30 seconds. Drain and refresh in iced water, then peel. -before salting

## Step 2

The next day, drain any liquid, then place tomato mixture in a pan with 1 cup (250ml) vinegar. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat to low. Simmer for 30 minutes. Add sugar, spices and chilli, then simmer, stirring occasionally, for 1 hour.

## Step 3

Mix cornflour, and mustard seeds with remaining 1 cup (250ml) vinegar, then add to pan. Cook for 3-4 minutes until thickened. Add more cornflour mixed with water if it needs more thickening. Add any herbs you may want at this stage.

Pour hot relish into sterilised jars.

Will keep up to 6 months in the fridge once opened.

*Served at the gardens-January 2022-Angela*



# Notices

TOOWOOMBA COMMUNITY  
ORGANIC GARDENS presents

AN INTRODUCTION TO **RETROSUBURBIA**

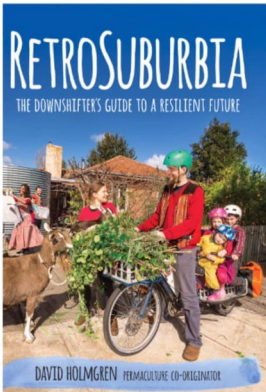
Saturday 11 March 2023 – 1.00 to 4.00 pm

Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens  
22A Goggs Street, Toowoomba

**FREE** for both members and non-members.



FACILITATED BY **DEBBIE BASSINGTHWAIGTE**



- ❖ Are you looking to create a more sustainable and resilient household?
- ❖ Do you want to grow food, reduce your energy use, and live a slower, simpler life?
- ❖ *RetroSuburbia* brings to life David Holmgren's vision of a sustainable, productive and vibrant permaculture lifestyle right in the suburbs where we live.
- ❖ Learn practical and positive solutions for retrofitting our homes, gardens and households, and to build and empower resilient individuals and communities.

*Debbie Bassingthwaigte is an enthusiastic and experienced facilitator, mentor, specialist teacher, and designer with a deep interest in permaculture-inspired self-reliance and resilience. She was the founding president of Permaculture Toowoomba Inc. and is a frequent guest speaker and workshop presenter for community groups. Debbie had the great privilege of attending a RetroSuburbia Masterclass with David Holmgren and also a RetroSuburbia Facilitators Course.*

# Working Bee



**2nd Sunday of every month**  
9am

Bring along your hat, sunscreen and sturdy footwear-lets team up to some of the bigger jobs around the TCOGA patch!



Each month, we will have a delicious lunch, with everyone free to contribute, BYO plates, cutlery etc.

Other bits and bobs that may come in handy:

- Cardboard for weed smothering
  - Seeds or Seedlings
  - Extra garden tools
  - Your wonderful ideas

Please let the committee know if you have any ideas or feedback for making these days fun for everyone and great for the garden!

# Committee and Contact

## 2023 COMMITTEE

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