



# GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

November 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



## President's Update

September and October have been very busy and productive months at TCOGA.

### In September:

- Ken led the construction of the new tank bases beside the shelter shed. The new tank is now in place but we are still waiting for the pump and plumbing to be connected... Thanks Ken.
- Jo organised two trips to collect manure for the gardens with lots of willing helpers and three trailer loads being collected in our first visit to the farm..... Thanks Joanne.

### In October:



Removing invasive plants from the western boundary

- Secretary Mike arranged our very first Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings North Toowoomba on Saturday October 12. Thanks to Mike and the 16+ members of TCOGA who volunteered their time to make the day highly successful. A full report on the Sausage Sizzle follows from Vice-President Wendy. Our next Bunnings Sausage Sizzle will be on Australia Day (January 26) so please put this date in your diaries.
- For some time Secretary Mike, President Andrew and Vice President Wendy have been developing a "TCOGA Procedures and Health and Safety Training Program". We tested this program out with some of our active members at a social lunch hosted by Wendy last Saturday. Feedback was positive. All members will be required to attend the training session once per year. The first training sessions will be advertised for February next year in line with the membership renewal time for 2020. Training Programs take only an hour to complete followed by morning or afternoon tea. My thanks to Mike and Wendy for their hard work on this program.
- Mike and Andrew have installed gutter guard on the gutters of the shed.
- Our current project is to clear the western boundary of the Members Garden of Declared and Restricted Invasive Plants. We have permission from our neighbours, Eureka Street Furniture, to clear the Invasive Plants on their side of the boundary fence. This work will be carried out during Wednesday and Sunday Social Gardening in the last week of October and the first week of November. Volunteers are needed. Please wear appropriate protective clothing including long sleeves, hats, gloves and enclosed shoes.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Gardens. Regards, Andrew Hawke

## BUNNINGS BBQ FUNDRAISER

On Saturday 19 October a small group of volunteers rose early to set up the BBQ at Bunning's Sausage Sizzle in North Toowoomba for the TCOGA's major fund raising event for the year.

Whilst we were extremely grateful and excited by the rain we did wonder how it would impact on our fund raising potential. The day started a little slow but once the rain



Very happy customers!



Wendy and Emilio ready for business!

stopped we had a steady flow of customers. Our efforts were rewarded as we managed to raise just over \$1200.

The success of our first Bunnings Fundraiser was made possible by a wonderful group of volunteers who volunteered to give up their time to help prepare, organise and volunteer for shifts for the day. Special thanks must go to Mike, Andrew, Jo and Jeanette for a lot of work before the event and on the day. Thanks to Linda for the money collection, to

Col and Chris for their help in setting up so early in the morning and to Carlene, Edith, Denise, Kate, Claire, Emilio and Lynn for taking shifts in the BBQ tent and Jane for her behind the scenes work.

Once again a big thank you to all our volunteers who made our first Bunnings BBQ effort a success.

Our next Bunning's BBQ fundraiser will be on January 26 and it will be very busy so we need more volunteers to make this an even a bigger success than our first effort. Information about this will come out in the November and December newsletter and via email closer to the day. Volunteer for a shift on the day and get to know some of your fellow gardeners whilst meeting your monthly volunteer commitment.

**TCOGA Committee**

## Brief Tips about Health and Safety in your Gardening Activities

Gardening is one of the most pleasant outdoor activities. However, this activity entails being exposed to high or low temperatures, contact with spores, dust or dirt, exposure to chemical or biological agents, etc. Like any human activity, gardening carries risks associated with the use of tools, handling materials, the ecosystem, etc. The first thing you must think of when you do not know something is not to be afraid to ask the more experienced members of your organisation – they will guide you in the right way. For example, when using tools, you must learn which one is the right tool for each task and how to use it. Check that the tools and/or pieces of equipment are in good condition for their effective use.

Do not hesitate to ask about the right clothing and the individual health and safety cream are always necessary.

Please read the labels. It is important to learn about any material that you use in your activities that will minimise the risks of allergies, asthma, urticaria (hives) and so on.

Using gloves will protect your hands from insect bites, cuts, chemicals, pathogens, blisters, etc. Please use the appropriate gloves according to the activities you are doing. In the case of being allergic to insect bites, bring your own medications. The use of insect repellent is always useful.

Repetitive movements may cause muscular, tendon or nerve injuries. Try to vary your activities every 15 minutes; take a rest in between to protect your muscles. For every activity the posture is very important, so look after your ergonomics.

When using bamboo or other stakes, always place an object on the top of each stake to protect you from any injury.

Finally, check the health and safety regulations in your area, ask the experts and please enjoy the unique experience of producing organically.

- Emilio Anteliz



## FUTURE PLANNING FOR THE GARDENS

The TCOGA is one of the oldest community gardens and has gone through many changes since its inception. In order to make sure our wonderful community thrives and flourishes the Committee is keen to devise a 3 – 5 year plan for the gardens. This will enable us to become much more focused and strategic in our project plans, allocating funds and applying for grant money.

We plan to do a major review of the gardens and invite all TCOGA members to have their say in what they would like to see happen in our community.

### Some potential things to consider could be:

*Are we living up to our core belief of sustainable gardening?*

*How can we make the gardens more productive?*

*Do we need more individual plots?*

*Do we need more communal plots?*

*Are we using and getting the best out of our allocated land?*

*Should we increase our links with the outside community?*

*How could we go about this?*

*What facilities do we need to add to the gardens?*

*How can we make the garden more 'water wise'?*

This is just a sample of the kinds of questions and ideas we will be considering in coming up with our plan. No doubt as we begin our review there will be ideas and suggestion that come up that we hadn't even thought of. The Toowoomba Regional Council has kindly offered to work with us and offer us the use of council services such as a landscape architect to help us come up with a practical plan. We will be establishing a working group to be involved in the creation of this 3 -5 year plan and it will be open to all members to participate in. We will also be canvassing members' ideas and thoughts through conversations over morning tea and social events, emails, newsletters and surveys.

Whilst the bulk of the planning work will begin in 2020, please keep the lines of communication open and do not hesitate to chat or send an email to committee members about your ideas for our future plan.



Thank you Toowoomba Regional Council for adding more new tools to our collection this month

## What to Plant in November

### Herbs

- Alfalfa/Lucerne
- Amaranth
- Balsam
- Basil
- Carraway
- Chives
- Chives—Garlic
- Echinacea
- Hyssop
- Lemon Balm
- Marigold
- Marjoram
- Mint Seedlings
- Oregano
- Parsley



Basil

- Purslane
- Rosemary
- Salad Rocket
- Summer Savory
- Sunflower
- Thyme

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

### Vegetables

- Lettuce
- Eggplant
- Jerusalem Artichokes
- Kohl Rabi
- Leek Seedlings
- Lettuce
- Mustard Greens
- Okra
- Parsnip
- Potatoes
- Pumpkin
- Radish
- Rhubarb
- Rockmelon
- Rosella

- Silverbeet
- Spring Onion
- Squash
- Sweetcorn
- Tomato
- Tomatillo Seedlings
- Turnip
- Watermelon
- Yacon
- Yam
- Zucchini

Chilli



## Fig Tree Beetles



Our fig tree is being eaten by these bugs (seen here multiplying before our eyes!).

We will be spraying them with Neem oil which is a registered organic insecticide for the control of many chewing and sucking insects including: caterpillars, curl grubs, grasshoppers (wingless), aphids, mites, lawn armyworm, citrus leafminer, whitefly, mealybugs and fungus gnats in soil. It will also control sooty mould.

*Removal by hand and squashing also works well if done consistently—Ed.*

## Vegetable Seedlings for Sale at TCOG

Contact Jeanette at The Gardens

All proceeds go to The Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens and they're cheaper than the shops!

## Fixing Nitrogen

Broad Beans are nearly over and it is time to plant other types of beans. If you are short of space, then plant climbing beans such as *Blue Lake*; French beans require more space. Apart from being an excellent green vegetable, beans are good for the soil as they 'fix' nitrogen, an essential element for healthy plants. What does this mean? Air consists of about 80% nitrogen as an element but plants need nitrogen in the form of compounds called nitrates. (That is about as such chemistry as you need!). Plants take in their needs via their roots and like other legumes, beans form a symbiotic relationship with soil bacteria (that is, "You scratch my back and I will scratch yours"! ). The soil bacteria infect the roots which form nodules to protect the bacteria; the plants supply the bacteria with carbohydrates and the bacteria supply nitrogen to the plant. Different types of beans need different bacteria.



To check for symbiosis, dig up a plant, wash the roots and check for nodules. No nodules mean NO nitrogen fixing. SOME nodules means there *might* be nitrogen fixing. Cut open a (white) nodule and if it is pink inside then nitrogen is being fixed. White nodules mean poor nitrogen fixing. So, apart from being tasty, beans are good for the soil and should be rotated with plants which take out a lot of minerals from the soil.

## Quick Notes for Your Calendar

**Saturday 2 & Sunday 3 November—Bromeliad and Tropical Spring Show and Sale**  
Belmont Shooting Complex, 1485 Old Cleveland Road, Belmont  
[bromsqueensland.com.au](http://bromsqueensland.com.au)

**17-19 January—Ginger Flower & Food Festival**  
[gingerfactory.com.au/ginger-flower-food-festival/](http://gingerfactory.com.au/ginger-flower-food-festival/)

**Sunday 26 January—TCOGA Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser**  
Bunnings North, Ruthven Street.

## Spiced Nuts

These nuts are totally addictive. If you leave the creamy macadamia nuts out of the equation they are incredibly healthy too, providing vital minerals such as magnesium, calcium and vitamin E as well as precious protein to keep your hunger pangs at bay.

### Ingredients

200g blanched almonds  
200g walnuts  
200g macadamia nuts  
2 tsp fennel seeds  
1 tbsp cumin seeds  
200g pumpkin seeds  
2 tbsp pale honey  
2 tbsp olive oil  
2 tsp rosemary, finely chopped  
2 tsp smoked paprika  
1 tsp cayenne pepper  
Salt and black pepper

### Method

1. Preheat the oven at 190C/Gas 5. Put the almonds on one baking tray and walnuts and macadamia nuts on another and bake for about 5 minutes, or until the almonds and macadamias have turned a pale golden colour. The almonds might take a little

less time than the other nuts. Turn the oven down to its lowest setting.

2. Tip one lot of nuts into the other and line the empty baking tray with foil.
3. Meanwhile, heat a dry frying pan, add the fennel and cumin seeds and toss them for a few minutes. Remove, put in a mortar and pestle and roughly grind them. It doesn't matter if there are still some whole seeds.
4. Now put the pan back on the heat, add the pumpkin seeds and toast for a few minutes over a medium heat. Add the honey, oil, rosemary, spices and nuts and stir continuously until the nuts are evenly coated with the spices and the honey has started to caramelize. Season with 1-2 teaspoons of salt.
5. Lay the nuts out on the lined baking tray, put back into the oven for a few minutes, then remove from the oven and leave on the tray to cool. They will keep in an airtight container for a good week or two. Use as a stopgap for those hungry moments or serve with drinks in the evening.

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### Empty Bottle Donations

We are collecting plastic bottle tops for the Clifford Park Special School! Bring them to the Gardens and add them to the bag.

2018—2019 COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: Andrew Hawke

VICE PRESIDENT: Wendy Snigg

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

TREASURER: Linda Mangubhai —[tcoga.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:tcoga.treasurer@gmail.com)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Joanne McClelland, Chris Walpole, Jeanette Walton

#### Coordinating Volunteers

Garden Plot Coordinator: Joanne McClelland

New Member Coordinator: Joanne McClelland

Grants Coordinator: Linda Mangubhai

Communications & Marketing Coordinator: TBC

Newsletter Editor: Carlene Gardiner

Project Coordinators: Andrew Hawke & Jeanette Walton

Newsletter of Toowoomba  
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