



GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

November 2021

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What Has Been Happening at the Gardens

Each social gardening day, I see and hear enthusiasm and inspiration. We are pretty passionate gardeners. People are getting on with their gardening projects. They are learning, discussing, sharing the information and having a lot of fun whilst doing it. I think we are very proud of our space, proud of the work we achieve and the friendships we make. We achieve good things in this community. When talking to visitors from other areas and other Community Gardens, we are so blessed to have the support from our local community and the Toowoomba Regional Council.

When I started writing this the big rainwater tank was empty (I hope the pump is ok), and sadly the town water was turned on. We thought that if rain didn't come soon we would have to start restricting that also. As a group, we need to come up with solutions to this ongoing problem. We do encourage members to conserve water by keeping watering to a minimum and using flow restricting nozzles. It is also in the Terms and Conditions of Plot Hire that all plots be mulched. Please check your garden. If you have any suggestions, PLEASE approach a committee member (listed on the back page), email us, or come to the monthly meeting with your ideas. It is not the sole responsibility of the Committee; it is a group problem so it needs a group solution. Please take some time to think about it. With the main water source for the Toowoomba Region down to 30%, we need an alternative to reliance on town water. Put your thinking cap on. We look forward to hearing some great ideas.

A warm welcome to all of our new members Gillian, Darryl, Angela and Adam, Sharon, Gary, Ashleigh and Tim, Rocco, Margo, Mason and Tony. We look forward to getting to know all of you. It is our belief that all of our members have something to share, so we are open to new ideas and to learning from everyone.

It was so wonderful to see the rain finally, but unfortunate for the many residents who received the hail. The big tank is one third full. Not much I know, but it is a start. If the plot holders in the Founder's area can continue to use the water from the two small tanks behind the shed, we might be able to stretch our supply out for a little longer. Thank you.

Joanne
President



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



TOOWOOMBA
community
ORGANIC GARDENS

Development of our Field Plots

With the arrival of spring, it was becoming urgent to decide what we were going to do with the two Field plots that had become “community” field plots.

Green manure crops had been grown in them during winter with Mustard in one and Fenugreek in the other, but it was now time to plant summer crops. The big problem was no one was willing to volunteer to dig such big plots. The soil was very hard and compacted.

Reading an article in the latest Organic Garden magazine about a tomato grower’s method of preparing her garden beds; she didn’t dig but just loaded the soil with lots of mulch and manure and then planted. I thought that we could try this.

Ken brought in his hedge trimmer and cut down the Mustard, then we just put a shallow layer of forest mulch and a thicker layer of sugarcane mulch, with manure pellets thrown liberally in the layers.



Photo from the Archives

After the first good shower we had, the soil under the mulch was moist and soft. Digging with a trowel was easy, whereas before it was difficult with a garden fork. It was an amazing change in such a short time.

I have planted a variety of vegetables and I am looking forward to seeing how well they do.

I expect that the soil will hold the moisture very well and not need much water. I will keep a check on the moisture level in the soil and keep everyone posted as to how often I need to water.

I hope this will give encouragement for our gardeners to use lots of mulch in their plots.

- Jeanette

What to Plant in November

Herbs

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Alfalfa/Lucerne | Oregano |
| Amaranth | Parsley |
| Balsam | Purslane |
| Basil | Rosemary |
| Carraway | Salad Rocket |
| Chives | Summer Savory |
| Chives—Garlic | Sunflower |
| Echinacea | Thyme |
| Hyssop | |
| Lemon Balm | |
| Marigold | |
| Marjoram | |
| Mint Seedlings | |



Rosemary

Vegetables

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Asparagus Crowns | Cucumber |
| Beans—Climbing,
Dwarf & Snake | Lettuce |
| Beetroot | Eggplant |
| Broccoli Seedlings | Jerusalem Artichokes |
| Cabbage
Seedlings | Kohl Rabi |
| Cape Gooseberry | Leek Seedlings |
| Capsicum | Lettuce |
| Carrots | Mustard Greens |
| Celery | Okra |
| Celeriac | Parsnip |
| Chilli Peppers | Potatoes |
| Chinese Cabbage | Pumpkin |
| Choko | Radish |
| | Rhubarb |
| | Rockmelon |
| | Rosella |
| | Silverbeet |
| | Spring Onion |
| | Squash |
| | Sweetcorn |
| | Tomato |
| | Tomatillo Seedlings |
| | Turnip |
| | Watermelon |
| | Yacon |
| | Yam |
| | Zucchini |



Watermelon

Christmas Party in November

We have set the date for the members Christmas Party:
Sunday 28 November 11am – 2pm at the Gardens

Please bring a plate to share and a gift to exchange –
handmade to the value of no more than \$10 (cuttings / jam /
craft / sewing / art etc)

Any enquiries please feel free to contact Sharon 0427 655 686

2 Litre Bottles

Thank you everyone for your contribution of 2 litre milk containers. We have enough now and will shout again when running low. Just a reminder – there is plenty of worm wee and comfrey tea for your gardens, available now.

- Happy gardening, Sharon



Re-house a Retiring Hen

We match retiring commercial egg hens to friendly households looking for chooks to love. We have a \$10 adoption fee to cover vet bills and purchase costs

@redsrescuesbrisbane Community

<https://www.facebook.com/redsrescuesbrisbane/>

Red's Rescue, Brisbane

Share Waste

Hi everyone,

Below I am sharing information about **ShareWaste**, a social network whose aim is to “connect people who wish to recycle their food scraps and other organics with their neighbours who are already composting, worm-farming, or keeping farm animals.”

The objective is to reduce the amount of organic waste that could be reused and avoid sending it to landfill. Please consider making the network grow in Toowoomba.

ShareWaste: <https://sharewaste.com/>

All the best, Emilio



Kitchen Scraps



Composting

The Community Gardens and their Important Role in Carbon Sequestration

Carbon sequestration is the process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂). It is one method of reducing the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere with the goal of reducing global climate change; whereas a **carbon sink** is any reservoir that accumulates and stores some carbon-containing chemical compound for an indefinite period and thereby lowers the concentration of CO₂ from the atmosphere, (such as forests, woody plants, mangroves or soils).



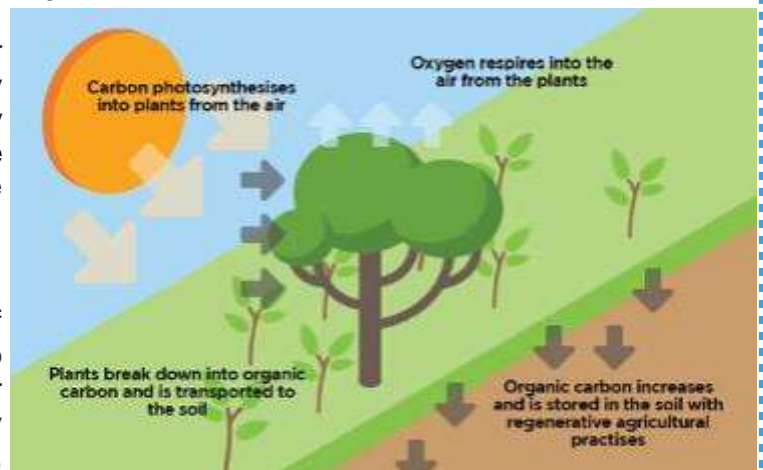
The ocean, atmosphere, soil and forests are the world's largest carbon sinks, and this is why protecting our carbon sinks is so important. Soil is capable of storing a lot of carbon and, in some ways soil is a lot more powerful than living things at storing carbon.

Carbon in the atmosphere combines with oxygen to become CO₂, which is a greenhouse gas. Greenhouse gases absorb and then re-emit energy back to the Earth. The more CO₂ there is in the air, the warmer the temperatures on land and in the oceans. Scientists believe that this warming is responsible for

increasingly destructive storms, desertification and a rising sea level.

Among the many benefits of community gardens, our organisations can help to fight climate change by reducing the distance that food travels and by minimising the carbon footprint of food. However, the most important benefit starts with a healthy soil where anything done to improve soil health and structure will also increase carbon in the soil.

Management practices such as the addition of organic amendments, (compost, manures or crop residues), mulching garden beds and around trees, or using cover crops will have direct effects, thereby increasing the carbon input in soils. Consider, reducing digging, reducing or not engaging in tillage and implementing erosion control practices which will reduce the carbon loss from soils. Starting a compost pile at home, in your neighbourhood, or through your community garden is also of high importance.



Additionally, planting different species forming ecological communities will help with increasing carbon sequestration. This occurs when multiple species of plants with similar needs form ecological relationships and interactions with one another, literally creating and maintaining the conditions that they need in order to flourish. These interactions also enable short and long-term carbon sequestration. Consequently, it is important to choose plants whose requirements suit the site and the existing soil, thereby avoiding synthetic fertilisers or excessive maintenance. Similarly, it is useful to choose native plants as companions owing to their natural adaptation to the region where the garden is placed.

Please commit to organic gardening. It is time to reverse the effects caused by human activities whereby climate change is affecting all of us. Increasing all the possible ways for sequestering carbon back into soil is our present responsibility to future generations.



I found this statement by **Resilience**, a program of the **Post Carbon Institute** in the United States, and I would like to share it with you: **“Even the smallest garden can be [a] vital part of this great effort, and the gardener a powerful climate activist.”**

- Emilio Anteliz,
30 September 2021

Build Your Own Frog Hotel

Frogs play an important part in our ecosystems but sadly their numbers are in decline in Australia. No room for a frog pond, or want to disturb your neighbours with loud frog calls (which only occur in the mating season)? Why not build a frog hotel?

I saw a frog hotel at one of the Carnival competition gardens. Constructed out of a plastic laundry basket, some bamboo fencing from the hardware store, some gravel and some decorative pebbles. A water plant helps to keep the water clean and some PVC piping provides the hiding places. Could not be easier.

Find a shady spot in your garden; make it and they will come.

- Linda



Taking Care of Bees



With all of the flurry of spring vegetable planting, we mustn't forget to plant something for the bees. In the past couple of years our bee population has been affected by drought and bushfires which has taken a toll on them.

An apiarist who wrote in the RACQ magazine suggested that we could make a habit of visiting our local nursery once a month and purchasing native plants that are flowering to put in our gardens. By doing this we will have something flowering in our gardens all year round to feed the bees. Of course, we will also have fun selecting and planting them.

There is no need to tell our organic gardeners not to use chemical-based insecticides and pesticides. "They are the biggest human killers of bees in Australia".

Why not try some of the following:

Swan River Daisies—*Brachyscome*



Everlasting Daisy—*Bracteantha*

Native Bottlebrush—*Callistemon*

Grevillea—many different varieties

Tea Tree—*Leptospermum*



Honey Myrtle—*Melaleuca Thymifolia*



Native Rosemary—*Westringia*

Thryptomene—flowers in winter

There are so many options, including



exotic species like

lavender, *Hebe*, *Buddleia* and *Salvia*. There's sure to be a spot in your garden to include a few.



- Carlene

Zucchini Frittata

The new season zucchinis are in the shops and in abundance at the local markets, so this great lunch, or quick light dinner dish might just be right for you!

Ingredients

4-5 small zucchinis
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon butter
4-5 eggs
2 teaspoons chopped parsley
1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme
1/2 teaspoon salt
Freshly ground black pepper
3 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese



Method

1. Slice the unpeeled zucchinis thinly. Heat the oil and butter together in a medium-sized omelette pan and cook the zucchinis until lightly browned.
2. Meanwhile beat the eggs lightly with all of the seasonings. Pour over the zucchinis and cook until just set.
3. Sprinkle the grated parmesan cheese on top and put under a pre-heated grill to brown lightly. Cut in wedges to serve.

Serves 4-6 as an entree dish.

- 1001 Ways with Food



Quick Notes for Your Calendar

Saturday 20 November - TCOGA Meeting at The Gardens—at 10.00am

Sunday 28 November—TCOGA Christmas Party 11am to 2pm at the Gardens

Many new events are being planned for 2022 including:

25 February to 6 March—Stanthorpe Apple and Grape Festival

Includes open gardens. More information: appleandgrape.org

Toowoomba Mower
Centre
Supplying & Servicing
3 Sowden St, Toowoomba



Toowoomba Mower Centre
Supplying & Servicing
4630 2150
toowoombamowercentre.com.au

2021—2022 COMMITTEE

President: Joanne McClelland

Vice President: Emilio Anteliz

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

Treasurer: Lyndell Chambers —tcoga.treasurer@gmail.com

Committee Members: Linda Mangubhai, Ritu Sood and Ken Shirtcliff

Social Coordinator—Sharon Kinnear

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

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