



GROWING NATURALLY



Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association Incorporated

September 2020

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What Has Been Happening at The Gardens

The last month has been a busy time for all of our regular gardeners. The focus has again been on preparing for the Open Days which will be on Sunday 20 September and Wednesday 23 September as part of the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers. Please remember to encourage your friends and family to come along and visit the gardens during this time. Seedlings and plants will be available for sale and there will be tours of the gardens.

The recent mulch delivery from the TRC was greatly appreciated. Three or four of our regular members got stuck in when it arrived and moved about 1/3 of the pile. Hopefully by the time you read the September Newsletter more members will have helped to distribute the mulch in the community areas of the gardens. Working in these areas during the Social gatherings on a Wednesday and Sunday is a great way to get some exercise and to get to know your fellow gardeners.

The new committee is keen to emphasise the community aspect of the garden and give opportunities for all members to contribute to what happens in the garden. With that in mind we are going to hold our first Spring Planning Day. This will be held after our committee meeting on Saturday 5 September at 11.00am in the gardens. We want your ideas and feedback on what seedlings and seeds should be planted in the Community Garden areas. So please come along and bring a plate to share for morning tea/lunch so we can all contribute to the plan for spring.

We will run planning sessions at the beginning of each season so all members can contribute their ideas and be aware of what is going on in the gardens. The committee is also keen to run some gardening workshops. We are hopeful that we can run one of these soon, however, that will depend on what happens with COVID-19.

As the days get longer and warmer it is certainly time to enrich your garden soils and get ready for spring planting both in your plot and in the community garden areas.

We look forward to seeing you at the gardens soon.

Wendy Snigg, President TCOGA

Spring is Almost Here!!!!

What do we plant in the community areas of the gardens?
Come along to our Spring Planning Session and share your ideas on what we could plant

When: Saturday 5 September

Time: 11.00 am

Where: At the Gardens

Bring along a share plate so we can all enjoy a shared light morning tea/lunch as we put together our plan for Spring.

Toowoomba Mower Centre Supplying & Servicing



Toowoomba Mower Centre Supplying & Servicing



The Soil as a Living Ecosystem and Why It's Important to Keep It Healthy



A good soil quality is the basis of agricultural production. In healthy soil, the plants sustain themselves, extract the nutrients that are produced in the soil, take up the water and air, and find the physical conditions like texture, permeability and temperature that they need to grow and produce. Whether soil is healthy depends on these conditions: **chemical** - adequate quantity and proportion of nutrients; **physical** - porosity, water retention capacity, drainage, temperature and respiration; and **biological** - the visible and non-visible organisms in the soil.



When these conditions are underestimated during the conventional production practices, the effects are poor and lead to diseased soils that are not able to sustain good production. The use of commercial fertilisers to increase production adds an excess of nitrogen (**N**) that can contribute to soil acidification, eutrophication*, acid rain and increased ground-level ozone, among other negative effects. At the opposite end of the spectrum, insufficient use of fertilizers means that soil nutrients taken by the crops are not replenished, leading to soil degradation and reduced yields.



The improvement and maintenance of soil health are among the bases of organic agriculture. From that perspective, what should we do to have healthy soil? A good natural source of nutrients for the plants is a combination of organic ingredients such as composts, manures and worm juice to improve soil health metrics compared with the outcome when each of these is applied singly. At the same time, it is important to avoid the over-application of these nutrients.



If you use any commercial soil product for your garden, this must comply with the Australian Standards for soils, potting mixes, composts, mulches,



etc, so please read the information carefully before making any purchase, or alternatively, ask specialists in the field.



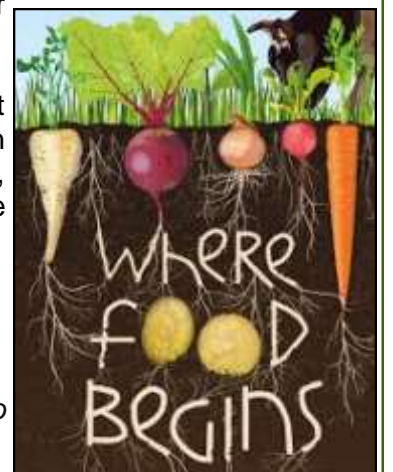
Managing soil health can be accomplished by keeping soil disturbance to a minimum, growing as many different species of plants as is practical, keeping living plants in the soil as often as possible and keeping the soil covered all the time (U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)).

Healthy soil does not pollute its environment, but rather contributes to mitigating climate change by conserving or increasing its carbon content.

Please keep in mind: A healthy soil is like a healthy person. When it is well fed, it can produce healthy and abundant crops. Soil with organic matter can retain water like a sponge. This ability to retain water allows plants to continue to grow, resisting drought and disease. Soil is a living and life-giving natural resource where food begins.

Emilio Anteliz
29 August 2020

* Excessive richness of nutrients in a lake or other body of water, frequently due to run-off from the land, which causes a dense growth of plant life.



COVID-19 Safe Practices at the Gardens

We are so pleased to see our members are returning to the gardens. To do this safely we still must follow the Government's health warnings and guidelines.

The TCOGA Committee asks that you:

- Do not come to social gardening if you are unwell
- Make sure you sign in when you come to the gardens.
- Follow the 1.5m – 2m physical distancing rule at all times
- Please bring your own gardening gloves
- Bring your own cup for morning tea
- There are to be only **two people in the shed** at one time

Soap and hand sanitizer will be provided at the gardens, but members are also encouraged to bring their own.

The link below will keep you up to date with the latest COVID-19 situation and the latest government restrictions and health messages.

<https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au>

The TCOGA committee will be following the advice from government to continue to manage this situation.

Plot Report for August 2020

There have been lots of enquiries and interest in joining the Organic Gardens, but no new members this month.

There are a couple of plots available, so there will be some happy new members when they join us.

Wishing everyone happy gardening.

- Joanne

What to Plant in September

Herbs

Alfalfa / Lucerne	Coriander
Amaranthus	Corn Salad
Angelica	Cow Pea
Anise Hyssop	Dandelion
Basil	Dill
Borage	Endive
Buckwheat	Evening Primrose
Burdock	Fennel
Carraway	Feverfew
Catnip	Horseradish
Chickory	Hyssop
Chamomile	Lemon Balm
Chervil	Loofah
Chia	Marjoram
Chilli	Mint
Chives	Nasturtium
Chives— Garlic	Oregano
	Parsley
	Salad Burnet



**Evening
Primrose**

Vegetables

Artichoke—Globe	Leek	Spring Onion
Asparagus Crowns	Lettuce	Squash
Beans—Climbing & Dwarf	Marrow	Sunflower
Beetroot	Mizuna	Sweetcorn & Maize (frost tender)
Broccoli	Mustard Greens	Sweet Potato
Cabbage	Parsnip	Swede
Cape Gooseberry	Peas—Climbing, Snow & Dwarf	Squash
Capsicum	Potatoes (frost tender)	Tomatillo
Carrots	Pumpkin (frost tender)	Tomato
Celeriac	Radish	Turnip
Celery	Rhubarb	Zucchini
Cucumber	Rockmelon (frost tender)	
Daikon	Salsify	
Eggplant	Silverbeet	
Jerusalem Artichoke	Shallots	
Kale	Spinach	
Kohl Rabi		

Tomatillo





How to Get Rid of Aphids and Whitefly

At The Gardens there are quite a few aphids and also clouds of microscopic white fly about now, sap sucking on Brassicas and Broad beans. One reason this can happen is because of over-fertilising Brassicas. *[This may cause an excessive amount of tender new growth that attracts aphids and other pests Ed.]*

In their asexual phase; aphids each lay up to 10 live young and then each of those do the same within the week. Look up the aphids' life cycle and how to get rid of them for more information.

I have found that aphids and white fly are similar and don't like being sprayed with soapy water. Weekly spraying is a good way to deal with them, other than catching and squishing them. Ladybugs like aphids, but are not yet about in large numbers. Therefore, it's best to catch them before they spread and spraying with soapy water works. I have left a good collection of 'soap-ends' that I soaked in water in a jar in the shed.



Here is a link to some information about white flies <https://www.pestwiki.com/natural-remedies-whiteflies/>. There is quite a lot of information about them on the internet. Another good reference site is Sustainable Gardening Australia <https://sgaonline.org.au>. It is a Victorian site which is very well presented, reliable and well organised.

- Margaret Lyness

Improving Your Soil The Easy Way

Compost and good mulch give amazing results by improving the soil in your garden, but there are also everyday actions that will add up to making a difference to your soil without a lot of effort.

Leaves of plants, twigs and small branches cut up and put back on the surface of the soil while you are working around your garden create an immediate mulch. Do not use grasses or weeds that have set seed or you will only be making more work for yourself in the future! My mother had the saying of 'One year seeding = seven years of weeding' so to avoid making a lot of work for yourself, it is always wise to make sure to remove weeds before they set seed.

When removing finished crops and plants it is often a simple process of just chopping them up with a spade and leaving them on the surface, or digging them in and they will break down as compost in the soil.



Wandering Jew

I have used the tall broad bean tops by just making shallow trenches in the garden bed and burying them with soil so that they rot down, enriching the soil.

As a child my mother taught me how to methodically flip each spadeful of soil over when digging the garden thereby turning weeds and finished crops under the soil to break down. But make sure that you do not do this with weeds that will grow and multiply from small pieces, like nutgrass, couch, kikuyu and 'wandering jew'.



Kikuyu

Frequently you will hear that grass clippings should not be put onto garden beds but I have always used them and so long as they are spread thinly, not in big thick wads, I have found them to be a great soil improver.

It is important to add a nitrogen rich fertilizer such as chicken manure to your soil, because when mulch is breaking down it will draw out nitrogen from the soil. So to make sure that your plants don't suffer during this process, put pelletised manure down first and your garden will thrive.

- Jeanette

Quick Notes for Your Calendar

Saturday 5 September 11.00am—Our Spring Planning Session *(All encouraged to come along)*
Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens

18—27 September—Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers
www.tcof.com.au

Sunday 20 & Wednesday 23 September—TCOGA Open Days – during Carnival of Flowers

Friday to Sunday 19-21 September - Qld Garden Expo— Nambour Showgrounds
<https://qldgardenexpo.com.au/>



A little bit of history!

TCOGA OPEN DAYS 2020

As one of the many events being supported by the **Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers** the **Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens** are proud to present **'Spring in the Gardens'**.

**When: Sunday 20 September—9:00am to 12noon and
Wednesday 23 September— 9:00am to 12noon**

Where: 22a Goggs Street, Toowoomba

Seedlings and Plants will be for sale on both days.

Encourage your friends and family to come along and support us on our Open Days

The TRC website suggests visitors make a Gold Coin Donation when visiting

More information about our Open Days can be found at: <https://www.tcof.com.au/spring-in-the-gardens>

Orange and Almond Cake

With all of the oranges Ken has kindly been bringing in to share with everyone the following recipe might tantalise your taste buds and make good use of the oranges. This recipe is also gluten and dairy free but can be enjoyed by all. It does take a while to prepare, but it's worth it, so give yourself 3 hours 50 minutes from start to finish.

Ingredients

- 2 large oranges**
- 200g caster sugar**
- 6 eggs**
- 200g ground almonds**
- 1 teaspoon almond essence**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 3 tablespoons of slivered almonds**

Method

1. Put the oranges in a pot and cover with cold water. Bring to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer for 2 hours. Top up with more water if they start to boil dry.
2. Preheat the oven to 170 degrees C. Line a springform 20cm cake tin with baking paper.
3. Remove the oranges from the water. Using a sharp knife, carefully remove the skin. Cut oranges in half discarding any seeds. Place in the food processor with the caster sugar, eggs, ground almonds, almond essence and baking powder. Blitz until smooth.
4. Transfer the mixture into the prepared cake tin and sprinkle the slivered almonds over the top
5. Bake in the pre-heated oven for 1 hour 30 minutes. Check it halfway through and cover it with foil if it starts to burn on top.
6. When cooked let it cool in the tin for 10 minutes then remove from the tin and put it on a cake rack to cool completely.
7. To serve, dust with some icing sugar.



2020—2021 COMMITTEE

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Newsletter of Toowoomba
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Past Newsletters [Link](#)

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