

# Canberra Organic

## ORGANIC GROWING IN THE CANBERRA REGION

Quarterly publication of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc.



**VOL. 10 NO. 1**

**AUTUMN 2002**

## CANBERRA ORGANIC

Quarterly magazine published by the  
Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc.  
Vol 10 No. 1 (Issue 37)

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There are four issues each year,

Autumn (February), Winter (May), Spring  
(August), Summer (November).

Copy deadline is the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the month  
prior to each issue.

Articles in the magazine do not necessarily  
reflect the views of the Society.  
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are not specifically endorsed by the Society.

### EDITOR:

Stephen Dean with help from Steve. Thanks  
heaps!

### PRODUCTION:

Stephen Dean  
Software: Microsoft WORD 2000™  
Printed by AUSSIEPRINT on recycled paper.

### ADVERTISING:

Contact Steve Sutton 6292 5609  
Email: [suttonsm@lighteningpl.net.au](mailto:suttonsm@lighteningpl.net.au)

The Canberra Organic magazine is a unique  
medium for reaching people in the Canberra  
region who have an interest in organic food,  
gardening and general environmental issues.  
Our circulation is currently 550.

### Advertising Rates

Size	Price 1 Issue	Price 4 Issues
¼ page	\$9 (\$7)	\$30 (\$25)
½ page	\$18 (\$15)	\$60 (\$50)
¾ page	\$36 (\$30)	\$120 (\$100)
Full page	\$72 (\$60)	\$240 (\$200)

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THE SPECIAL RATE INDICATED IN  
BRACKETS**

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### From the Editor

Welcome to the Autumn edition of *Canberra Organic*.

It is a pleasure to take on a new project as editor of  
*Canberra Organic*. I commenced gardening with COGS as  
convener of the new Holder garden late last year. I have  
been an organic, no-dig gardener for many years in  
Canberra and look forward to a long association with  
COGS.

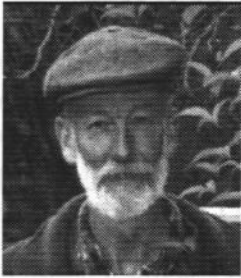
In this edition you will find our regular Community  
Garden Reports, "From the garden to the pot", Autumn  
planting guide & Notice Board.

Also included are articles on Grapes, Compost and the  
Xeriscape Garden.

Thanks to Deborah and Steve for they're past efforts in  
producing *Canberra Organic*, also thanks to the many  
members who have contributed articles over the past year.

Happy reading

Stephen Dean



## President's Report

The hot dry start to the New Year came to an abrupt end at the beginning of February. Suddenly, instead of worrying about whether our plants had enough water to survive in the heat we were wondering if all our water-logged potatoes would rot before the ground dried out. In spite of the weather extremes we have experienced in the last couple of months all the gardens are looking very good with most gardeners picking good crops. The progress of the new gardens is very pleasing.

Both Holder and Kambah are now full and Cook and Queanbeyan fast catching up. The established gardens are also producing well although the Cotter garden's experiment during the Christmas bushfires of cooking the produce on the plants before it was picked was not very successful.

The year has started off with a lot of activity. The Xeriscape garden program has commenced and COGS presented talks of growing winter vegetables on 23 and 24 February. We also participated in the TASTE of Canberra farmer's market (part of the Celebrate Canberra Festival) at Commonwealth Park. The new beginners' organic gardening course presented by COGS in conjunction with CIT Solutions started on 17 February with 13 participants and is progressing well. At our first monthly meeting Diane Baltaz from the Canadian Organic Growers presented an interesting talk to a good roll up of COGS members. It is expected that this pace of activity will continue throughout the year.

A major event coming up shortly is the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Get-together of the Community Garden Network which is being hosted this year by COGS. The Community Garden Network is a loose network of community gardens in all Australian States and New Zealand. We are planning to hold a workshop on Sunday, 7 April from 11am to 3:30pm at the Holder and Xeriscape gardens. The format of the workshop will be similar to last year's get-together in Woolloomooloo which many COGS members attended. We expect representative from various Sydney gardens as well as representatives from other non-COGS gardens. ACT government and Queanbeyan City council representatives have also been invited. It promises to be a very interesting workshop so please come also and help make the day a success.

I would like to remind all COGS members that our next meeting in the Griffin Centre at 7:30pm on 26 March is the Annual General Meeting. All positions are up for election so please consider getting involved in the work of the COGS Committee. The Committee meets the second Tuesday of every month in the Environment Centre. If you would like to learn more about COGS, organic gardening and what is going on in the organic scene more generally, being a member of the Committee is a good place to start. There is a lot of interesting work to be done and the more people involved on the Committee the more COGS can achieve. If you are not sure about how to nominate contact one of the Committee members and your nomination will be easily arranged.

Not only is the Annual General Meeting the occasion of the election of the COGS Committee for the next twelve months, it is also harvest night and the opportunity to show off the produce you have grown, your preserving skills and any brews you may have produced from your fruit. It is also the opportunity to discuss any problems you may have had with the season, pests or diseases and in the process we all learn something and become better gardeners. I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting.

Happy gardening,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Keith".

Keith Colls





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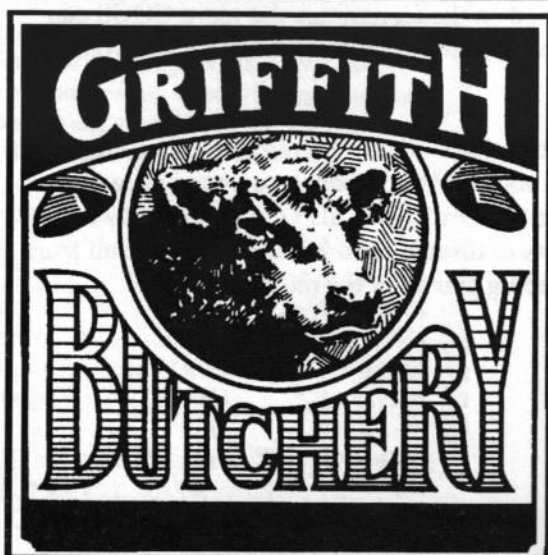
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## MAYOR PANGALLO OPENS QUEANBEYAN GARDEN

Queanbeyan Mayor Frank Pangallo opened one of COGS newest gardens, Railway Park Community Garden at Queanbeyan, on a glorious spring day last November.

Around 40 people turned up for the opening, bringing picnic hampers, their shovels and work boots.

Several members of Queanbeyan City Council attended – Crs Ann Rocca, John Wright and Tom Mavec– while others sent apologies.

Cr Pangallo inspected the garden, asking plot holders about the crops they were growing, before formal proceedings began.



“Planting grasses at the Opening day of Queanbeyan COGS”

COGS President Keith Colls spoke about COGS and its community gardens, and thanked Queanbeyan City Council for its financial assistance to establish the garden. Council paid for fencing, connection of a water supply and provided compost and soil.

Cr Pangallo outlined the history of the garden, on a former railway goods yard, and how the city council came to purchase the site and turn it over for parkland.

Cr Pangallo congratulated COGS on the project, and he reaffirmed the city council’s support for the garden, pointing out its benefits for the neighbourhood, which has a high proportion of people living in units and townhouses.

After formalities, members of Queanbeyan Landcare, gardeners, supporters and friends planted shrubs and grasses that Queanbeyan Landcare donated for a strip just outside the southern perimeter, before enjoying a barbecue supplied by the city council

The garden continues to attract members. In a little over six months, we have managed to fill two-thirds of the beds, with 15 plots rented and room for another seven or eight.

Local news media have taken an interest in the garden, with the Queanbeyan Age running a front-page report on the 24 November opening, and QBN FM providing regular spots on the Radio Landcare for updates.

For more information about the Queanbeyan garden, contact the convenors, Katrina Willis on 6232 9743 or Maree Timbs on 6297 5379.

## Low Sulphur Viticulture

*An interview with James Cray,*

*by Sam Statham, Rosnay Organic Farms, Canowindra, NSW*

James Cray is an example of clean, green, high quality viticulture, who in just 5 years has created a model of sustainability and non-toxic, organic production.

James has a 12 acre vineyard on sandy soil at Gingin, 50km north of Perth. His father and brother have vineyards 8km east at Bindoon. He is a contract grower of Chenin Blanc and Shiraz for Houghton Wines (BRL Hardy). His Chenin Blanc goes into the Houghton White Burgundy, which is still Australia's largest selling semi-premium white wine.

As organic grape growers learning the difficulties of managing powdery mildew without sulphur (due to be phased out of organic production in 2007), we learnt of James stunning success in biological viticulture and decided to give him a call.

I explained that we have been attempting to reduce sulphur use in our Chardonnay vines, which we have recently had to spray with sulphur to check the spread of powdery mildew during this humid season.

James explained that with his house in the middle of his vineyard, and his wife allergic to sulphur, he began trying to reduce sulphur use 3 years ago. Even though everyone else swears to the safety and benign action of sulphur, it is not pleasant to work with, as it turns to sulphuric acid in the lungs. As it works by killing fungi through vaporisation into gas, it smells awful in the vineyard for several days after use. Like many growers, he was often forced to use higher than label rates and repeated DMI (systemic) fungicides to have moderate control. Coupled with the fact that 50% of the sprays end up on the ground, where copper and DMI fungicides

destroy soil life, it was worth looking outside the square.

The alternative was first suggested by a friend of James working in eucalypt research at Murdoch University, who told him that Synertrol Horti Oil (a canola and tea tree oil wetting agent) gave them good control in the humid greenhouses where sulphur was not permitted. So James tried it, doing a trial of standard label rate of wettable sulphur (2kg/ha) versus half the label rate (1kg/ha) plus Synertrol. These were sprayed at high volume (1000L/ha), at 5km/hour with a Croplands single row trailing sprayer with opposing airflow jets to create "leaf flutter" and optimum coverage. (I realised that our own "low volume" sprayer may be part of our problem).

Anyway, James found there was no difference in the control of powdery mildew, in the two treatments. After speaking to Leyland Minter, of Organic Crop Protectants ([www.ocp.com.au](http://www.ocp.com.au)) James is now on a best practice low-sulphur program, in which sulphur is applied only twice in the season, at the label rate. He has also stopped completely the use of copper and systemic DMI fungicides. And his vines are now mildew-free and cropping heavily with large healthy canopies. Whilst the other contract growers in the region average 7 to 10 tonnes per hectare, James now crops his Chenin Blanc vines at 17t/ha, comfortably satisfying the Houghton quality standards. Likewise for Shiraz, at 14t/ha versus 7.5t/ha local average.

James' spray program, provided by OCP, is to use Eco-Carb (non-toxic potassium bicarbonate) for the first two sprays, sulphur for the third, Eco-Carb for the 4th and 5<sup>th</sup>



sprays, and sulphur for the 6th, possibly followed by Eco-Carb late in the season. These are all accompanied by Synertol, Acadian Seaweed and Aminogro marine fertiliser. (Just like our program except we used milk for the third spray and came off second best. Milk, like all these sprays, is effective only with good coverage, and high volume.)

James' canopy is double cordon vertical shoot positioned and hanging canes trimmed for traffic. James' father has now had the same results, even in a season the average temperature has been 25 degrees and humidity up over 45 per cent. On a recent Ag Department water use trial tour, he noticed powdery mildew in all 5 other local vineyards they visited. Some of them had been using triple label rates of sulphur and 3 DMI sprays, with the best spray equipment, and still have powdery mildew every year.

But there is more to the story than meets the eye. James has been hard at work improving his sandy soils. He makes his compost on a large cement pad, buying in poultry manure and turning it every two days, for one month, before maturing for another month. ("So", I thought to myself, "turning mine every two months is not enough!")

James spreads 30 cubic metres a hectare, and would like to spread more. The compost is doing wonders for the sandy soil, and helps reduce water use.

He also has a worm farm which puts out 450 litres of leachate per week, which is fed onto the vines through foliage and the drip system. When fertigrating James also applies molasses, which helps control root knot nematode. Rather than applying nematocides as advised by conventional agronomists, James aims to feed the trichoderma and other beneficial soil microbes through carbohydrates in molasses. He also believes the molasses helps improve fertiliser availability.

In terms of fertiliser use, James has over two years reduced his use of nitrogenous salts from 1.5T/ha in 2000 to 0.5T in 2001 and probably none in 2002. Likewise for potassium and phosphorous.

Part of the reason may also be in the cover crop, which is lucerne. The deep roots of the lucerne go beyond those of the vine to bring up deep nutrients which are mulched into the topsoil. Against all the best advice, James has found that the lucerne only grows vigorously in places where the vines grow too big too. This also has implications for groundwater and salinity management.

At the end, I finally asked James about the strange livestock I had been told about. "No sheep", he said, as they need fences, but he has 120 guinea fowl which range over the vines and pasture, scratching for grubs! Since they have been around, there have been no more wingless grasshoppers, which can decimate a vineyard. In fact, the guinea fowl are running out of food to eat, and jumping the fence to clean the neighbour's place!

Now looking for new ways to use natural, non-toxic agronomy to improve his production, James is looking at novel uses of OCP's Acadian seaweed extract. In Shiraz, he plans to spray it onto the vines during veraison (in a week or so) in order to stimulate colour development. In the Chenin Blanc, a very tight-bunched and hence botrytis-prone variety, he plans to use the natural gibberellin hormones in the seaweed to elongate the bunch stems and create a looser bunch structure.

Wow! Well that was one phone call where I learnt a lot not only about how to beat powdery mildew, but about how to think about it by looking outside the square. Good vintage!

Source : "Rosnay Organic Farming Email Newsletter - free subscription at [www.organicfarms.com.au](http://www.organicfarms.com.au)"

## Green Circle Organics

This is the name of my new business.

I hope to promote Green Awareness and sustainable living. I support diversity in seeds and plants and wish to introduce many new, rare and unusual non-hybrid seeds and useful plants that are suitable for the local climate and soils. Some seeds will be sourced in Australia and some overseas.

I will sell non hybrid sees only, because gardeners can then save their own seed and having bought it once, should not have to buy seed in following years. This helps to build up a wider base of locally acclimatised good varieties. The more food we grow locally, the less that has to be trucked in.

I will also have some herbs, both medicinal and culinary, cottage garden plants and soft fruits (berry) plants in season.

I plan to offer a variety of gardening products, some not currently available, at the best competitive price possible.

The main emphasis is on helping gardeners extend the season, protect crops from frost and pests, with various weights and sizes of Row Cloth and Green house film.

Greenhouse Film will last 4 years at least, is strong and pliable and can be clipped onto poly pipe frames. It transmits 93% of received light. It is good for winter , spring and autumn use.

The floating Row Covers come in 2 weights. The spring/autumn weight is lighter than the summer weight. The heavier weight acts as a heat trap, insect screen and frost protector. It transmits 85% of light. The cloth can be doubled to give extra frost protection. It can be used to wrap around delicate shrubs to protect them in winter.

The summer weight is THE answer to cabbage moths as it will keep out all such pests. It will also protect new transplants in

hot weather. It is pinned into place with Fabric Staples which are pushed into the ground like tent pegs. It allows 90% of light to penetrate and it is available in several widths as well as several lengths.

With the addition of a polyethylene pipe frame you can complete your cloche system. Polyethylene pipe does not deteriorate greenhouse film as PVC pipe does.

I will be selling at local markets and fairs such as The Green Living Fair, The World Environment Day and Field Days. This is somewhat of a hobby and something I have wanted to do for a long time. Where it will take me depends on inspiration and customer demand. I'm sure I will have a lot of fun and aim to provide excellent service and value. I will probably be ready to start in a few months time, certainly by the end of winter.

For inquiries please phone me on 6284 4238

Your gardening friend

Rosemary Stevenson

### COGS website has moved

The COGS website is now active on our own domain name, generously hosted by COGS member Karl Schaffarczyk at [Inspired.net.au](http://Inspired.net.au):

The URL is now

<http://www.cogs.asn.au>

The new website is being developed by Maren Child, the web manager, and a small group of volunteers.



## **A Giant Pumpkin Competition** and a Competition for *other big vegetables*

will be held at Youthhaven Horticulture, Kambah Pool Road, on Saturday 6 April 2001. All vegetables entered must have been grown in the ACT and entered by a resident of the ACT. For the purposes of this competition, a squash (usually green in colour to some extent) will be regarded as a pumpkin.

### **Prizes as follows**

- 1. For the Biggest Pumpkin**  
First prize:\$600 Second prize : \$300 Third prize :\$100  
These prizes have been donated by Mr. Brian Corkhill of Corkhill Bros
- 2. Closest to a mystery weight**  
\$50
- 3. Heaviest pumpkin between 0–49.9 kilos; 50–99.9 kilos; 100–150 kilos**  
\$20 prize in each section.
- 4. Biggest pumpkin grown by a child under 12 years on 6 April 2001**  
A \$50 prize.
- 5. In the following categories prizes of \$20 (1<sup>st</sup>) ; \$10 (2<sup>nd</sup>) ; \$5 (3<sup>rd</sup>) will be awarded.**  
**Biggest tomato**  
**Biggest zucchini**  
**Biggest carrot**  
**Biggest sunflower**  
**Most unusually shaped vegetable of any kind**  
**Best decorated vegetable**

**CLOSING TIME FOR ENTRY OF VEGETABLES ON SITE AT  
YOUTHHAVEN HORTICULTURE  
will be 11.30am on Saturday 6 April 2001.**

Youthhaven Horticulture is located on the Lions Clubs' Youthhaven property on Kambah Pool Road, North Kambah, opposite the Golf Course. It is a project of Fusion Australia and assists people who are not in work to grow organic vegetables as a creative and satisfying activity during the day.

#### **YOUTHHAVEN HORTICULTURE IS GRATEFUL TO ...**

- *The ACT Government for a grant of \$2,000 under the Community Renewal Program towards the cost of running this competition*
- *Mr. Brian Corkhill of Corkhill Bros for donating \$1,000 in prize money for the biggest pumpkins*
- *Yarralumla Nursery for propagating and distributing seedlings*
- *and THE GARDEN Nurseries , the Canberra Organic Growers Society, and Kurrajong Nurseries for distributing seedlings.*

## Plant profile:

### Broad Beans

#### Planting:

If PH is less than 6 add lime or dolomite (or apply wood-ash. Which also adds potash)

Plant seeds 5cm deep, 15cm apart in rows that are 24-30 cm apart

Mid June onward is the time to plant. If they flower when we are still having frosts they will not set the pods. You can plant<sup>2</sup> successive crops into early spring.

#### Care:

They are gross feeders needing high level of organic matter. Mulch to retain moisture, heap it quite high up the stems. Broad Beans are legumes therefore supply nitrogen to the soil. Do not let the spring plantings dry out.

#### Pests and Diseases:

Attracts cabbage white butterfly when in flower. Chocolate spot-brown patches on leaves - spray with soapy water. Aphids on the tips in late winter/spring- pick off the tips

#### Companion Plants:

Likes spinach, potatoes, lettuce, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, corn, lovage, and marjoram.

Dislikes Fennel, garlic, onions

#### Harvesting:

Spring onwards. Can be eaten whole as young pods. When they reached full maturity the pods will be about 30cm. Remove large beans from the pods and cook separately.

#### Saving Seed:

Allow the pods to dry on plant. Remove the pods and retrieve the seed from the pods. Allow seeds to dry for another week in well ventilated place, then store in a dark place.

## Organic Origins

*Gardeners With Attitude*



### Who are we ?

Organic Origins is a Co-operative Enterprise based on Permaculture and organic gardening principles. Offering consultancy services and books. Community Education, Garden Design & Management, Herbs & Vegetables, Mulches & Manures, Compost Bins, Worm Farms, "No Dig", Raised & Easy Care Gardens, Creative Recycling, and Foodscaping, Big & Small.

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### Back to Earth Natural Health Fair

Saturday/Sunday 20/21 April 2002

Multi-Function Centre, Cooma NSW

#### Event Organiser:

Ms Lisa Stuart, Proprietor,  
Back to Earth Natural Health Clinic,  
Soho St, Cooma NSW 2630

Email: N.A.

Phone/Fax: 02 6452 5544

## Rose Walters - An Appreciation

Many years ago, in the early life of COGS, it was called OGFSACT, (Organic Gardening and Farming Society of the ACT). This was the name the 70 members voted for at our very first General Meeting.

It was during those early years that Rose Walters saved the life of the Society. At an AGM the retiring President asked for volunteers for the office of President, and when no one was willing to take on the job, he suggested that the society would have to combine with the Natural Health Society, which was a large, nationwide Organisation, very successful in Canberra.

Our Society had been formed by members of that group, and we knew we would be swamped by them, and would no longer be able to run our own Society the way we wanted.

Everyone was horrified, and we looked at each other in dismay. I was due to go overseas in a week, so couldn't stand again. Then Rose angrily stood up and said, "I'm too old to do it, but I'll do it rather than see the Society go down."

She was a very forthright person, always standing up for what she thought was right. She ran the Committee Meetings like a Sergeant Major, and we all did what we were told, and so the Society prospered, for Rose knew more about Organic Growing. than most of us, and was putting it into practice in her little home garden.

I used to take her a bag of seaweed now and then, for we were bringing truckloads of it collected off the beaches for my Organic Farm. She really appreciated having it for her compost heap, and would give me



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chickweed for my chickens in exchange, and also some of her garden wisdom.

She started putting her moon planting into our newsletter, continuing this for many years. She kept her source of information a secret, but I know that some of the knowledge came from her. She did not, however, take into account the stars, only the moon.

I am sure that her Heaven is an Organic Garden where she can work without the arthritis which plagued her in her later years.

Betty Cornhill





**12<sup>th</sup> APPLE DAY  
and  
ORGANIC FAIR**

**Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2002  
1.30 – 5.00 pm**

Loriendale Orchard is hosting its 12<sup>th</sup> Apple Day, providing visitors with the chance to discover a wide range of fresh, organic apples originating in many countries. Try nashi pears, hazelnuts or some of the many other organic treats. See the pressing of fresh apple juice on a C19th styled wooden apple press and try the smoothest tasting juice.

This is the afternoon when the farm fresh apple pies and apple/rhubarb pies can be found. You can also find apple and quince jelly, a range of farm jams, relishes and chutneys made during the harvest season at

Loriendale. Fresh organic vegetables will also be available.

Relax and enjoy an '*all organic*' Devonshire tea/coffee with country scones, muffins or apple pie and cream, served in a rural garden setting. Relaxing music provided by local musicians and choir groups.

**Location:**

Travel along the Barton Highway, just north of Canberra. Turn east along Spring Range Road which is only 1 km from the ACT border and the orchard is 5 kms along, on the right.

More info: email: [organics@loriendale.com.au](mailto:organics@loriendale.com.au)

*As a community/church event, the afternoon raises funds for projects including TEAR Aust development projects and camping activities for teenagers in the A.C.T.*



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# SEAWEED IN YOUR GARDEN

by  
Betty Cornhill

The best vegetable garden I have ever had was the one I grew at my house at the coast.

Everything grew like magic there, and the reason? Every day when we came up from our swim, we brought two buckets of seaweed newly washed up on the beach.

My veggie patch was in the topmost corner of the land, and sloped down towards the end of the house. I planted cabbages, broccoli and cauliflowers in the winter and tomatoes, corn and beans in the summer. Peas grew wonderfully well and were our favourite vegetable.

My father came from England to stay. One day he found me carefully transplanting little corn plants, which were too close together. He said, "You can't transplant corn-" "I can, you know."

With a trowel you cut straight down about 6 cm from the plant, then make 3 other cuts on the other sides of the plant, remembering that little corn plants have a root that goes straight down about twice as far as the height of the shoot above ground. Lift it with its ball of soil and place it in the hole, already made where it is to grow. Give it a good soaking of water, and it doesn't even know it has been moved!

The secret of the wonderful growth and flavour of the vegies was in the seaweed.

I planted, rows across the contour, digging a ditch below the row, which I then filled with fresh seaweed, and topped with soil. That was the pathway. The following year, that was the row, and the plants revelled in the complete food below them.

For seaweed contains over 80 elements, all taken from the ocean in which it grows. It also provides organic matter and colloids, which are easy for the plant to assimilate.

My first experience with seaweed was as a child in Bermuda. One of my school friends invited me to spend a day on a rocky island in Hamilton Harbour. This island was tiny, simply bare rock, except for a little garden where her father every weekend, had put seaweed collected on the shore, until a patch of soil had formed on the bare rock, and he had then planted some bright pretty Geraniums, which were thriving, even through the latest hurricane weather.

This little garden impressed me so much that I have known ever since that you do not have to start with good soil, or any soil at all. By hard work and loving care you can **MAKE GOOD SOIL.**

## 6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL COMMUNITY GARDEN GET-TOGETHER

COGS will be hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Get-together of the Community Garden Network. It will be a one day workshop (11am to 3:30pm) on Sunday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April at Holder and Xeriscape gardens.

We attended the last Community Gardens Get-together at the Woolloomooloo community garden in Sydney.

It is expected that representatives of several of the Sydney Community gardens will attend and we hope as many COGS members as possible will also attend.

The day will Start at 11am at the Holder Community Garden (corner of Streeton Drive and Cotter Road. Enter off Cotter road.)

Representatives from all participating gardens will give a brief out line of their garden, plus we hope to have representatives from government as well, to out line why they support the gardens and what they see as the benefits to the community of the gardens.

Then we will break to have lunch (bring your own food, - tea and coffee provided). After lunch we will break up into smaller groups to discuss different areas of Community gardening eg maintenance programming, how to start a new garden etc.

For those of you with Internet access, details of the network can be found at [www.magna.com.au/~pacedge](http://www.magna.com.au/~pacedge)



### From the Seed Bank

The main aims of the Seed Bank for the year 2002 will be:

- 1 To maintain the Freshness of the currently held seed by getting it grown out by volunteers.
- 2 To set up a system of recording the activities of our Seed Saving Volunteers, who will be asked to fill in a pro forma when they accept seed for growing out and to agree to keep records of certain details.
- 3 To increase the variety of seeds in the bank, especially heirloom and rare types.
- 4 To buy in seed as needed, preferably from organic sources.

5 To ask the Community garden Convenors to identify plot spaces each season, which can be used for the growing out of seed, specifically for the Seed Bank.

6 To ask members to grow seedlings for sale at annual events such a The Green Living Fair, World Environment Day etc.

#### WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO GROW OUT SEEDLING OF WINTER VEGETABLES NOW

World Environment Day is in June and we could sell seedlings of Parsley, Winter Lettuce, Cabbages, Silver Beet and Garlic etc. If they are started ASAP



## **Canberra Community Food Security Association — [Pilot Project]**

The CCSFA is a grass roots effort to help build a healthier city. This pilot project is designed to assist low income residents of the ACT who are experiencing life threatening or chronic illness, and wish to use organic produce as part of their health management.

The CCSFA is designed to ease the stresses of poverty and hunger for those who have debilitating conditions, and struggle to get food on the table.

To get this project off the ground the CCSFA needs:-

- Suppliers willing to donate their excess produce for distribution to recipients.
- Volunteers willing to give a little of their time to help tend gardens for suppliers of the project. Volunteers are also needed for collection and distribution in their local area.
- Recipients—do you know someone who qualifies, and would like to be part of this project?

CCSFA ultimately aims to not only provide this bandaid measure, but with the aid of volunteers to help recipients to move towards establishing their own garden or to be a participant in a CCFA community garden plot, becoming self sufficient in organic produce as they can manage.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION contact Joanne Macdonald on 6241 1180

### **WORLD NEWS: LATEST RESEARCH FINDS GM SUPERWEEDS ARE A REALITY**

UK report says gene crops could create superweeds

LONDON - Farmers who plant genetically modified (GM) rapeseed may be creating new superweeds resistant to all but the toughest herbicides, a report from the UK government's advisory group on wildlife said yesterday. The report from English Nature, based on a study of three types of gene-spliced rapeseed grown in Canada, showed that pollen from seeds spilt during harvest can cross-pollinate with the other varieties and become resistant to multiple herbicides. "The plants themselves become weeds in the next crop - it's very difficult to kill the oilseed rape plants when they come up the next year and of course they come up in another crop like corn," English Nature's biotechnology advisor Brian Johnson told Reuters.

"The last thing farmers want is oilseed rape plants in amongst the corn. It's becoming an agricultural problem and farmers are having to use older herbicides to control them - those herbicides are less environmentally friendly and more toxic," he added.

Johnson said the government should limit the number of herbicide-resistant varieties to prevent the problem of super resistant plants arising in Britain if commercial growing of GM crops is approved.

"What we're saying is that the limit might be one variety instead of three as seen in Canada," he said.

He also urged a re-think of the European Commission's recent proposal for a one percent threshold of GM seed in batches of conventional seed.

"We're saying this is a bad idea because if you do that, that one percent could be seeds made of three different GM varieties," he said.

"In agreeing thresholds for those seeds, the European Commission may well be producing exactly the type of problem we're seeing in Canada."

Source: REUTERS NEWS SERVICE, February 6 2002

### **International News**

U.S. Pesticide Exports Remain High  
January 11, 2002

Nearly 3.2 billion pounds of pesticide products were exported from U.S. ports between 1997 and 2000, according to a Foundation for Advancements in Science and Education (FASE) analysis of Customs records recently published in the International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health (IJOEH). This average rate of almost 2.2 million pounds per day--or 45 tons per hour--represents a 15% increase over the rate of 936 tons per day documented for the years 1992-1996.

Nearly 65 million pounds of pesticides were exported between 1997 and 2000 that are banned or severely restricted in the United States, an average of more than 22 tons per day. Although no exports of banned products were recorded for the year 2000, shipments of several banned pesticides -- including captafol, chlordane, isazofos, monocrotophos and mirex -- were noted between 1997 and 1999.

Source: Pesticide Action Network

## Composting, Worm Farming and No-Dig Workshops

Saturday, 6 April 2002

Learn the secrets of ...

### Composting

- How to make your own compost. How to fix composting problems.
- How to use compost.

### Worms

- Varieties of worm farms. How to fix common problems.
- Use of worm products. Feeding techniques.

### No Dig Gardens

- Learn how easy it is to set up your own no dig garden.

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Ecos Design and Organic Origins

## Canberra Environment Centre

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\* Free to Friends of the Canberra Environment Centre and Conservation Council

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## Certified Mulch

We have taken delivery of a semi-load of certified BD rice straw in 5' round bales. It is an ideal mulch as they are virtually weed free and breaks down quite slowly. Last years mulching is still around but won't last much longer. One bale on a trailer or ute. \$90 a bale including GST — we can probably break bales, by arrangement, if a full bale is too much.

*Jonathan Banks*  
*Pialligo Apples*  
*10 Beltana Road, Pialligo*  
*Telephone: 6248 9228*  
*Email: apples3@bigpond.com*

## Xeriscape Gardens Autumn Program

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March,  
9am to 4pm

Plant sale of plants for autumn plantings.

COGS will be operating a stall on this day (9am to 4pm). If you are able to assist on the stall please contact Keith Colls on 62517729.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April and  
Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April

Fruit Trees: now is the time to be planning planting fruit trees. Also expert advice on managing your existing fruit trees. When to spray and with what. Special session with Phil Unger. 2.00pm both days

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April and  
Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April

Ferns and other associated plants: How to select the correct ferns, where to grow them and how to care for them, either indoors or outdoors. Special talks by speaker to be announced. 2.00pm both days

### PIALLIGO APPLES

FRESHLY PICKED APPLES  
FROM OUR ROADSIDE STALL  
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## FOWLER'S VACOLA BOTTLES FOR SALE:

All clean and in excellent condition.  
New prices quoted for sizes 20 and 31 were obtained from Magnet Mart this month.  
Estimated new prices based on jar sizes.  
Of course everything can be bought in smaller quantities as desired.

### Glass Bottles:

90 x No. 20 (3<sup>2</sup> - 600 ml) @ \$3.75 ea new  
\$337.50 Half price: \$168.75

34 x No. 27 (3<sup>2</sup> - 900 ml) @ \$5 ea new (est.)  
\$170 Half price: \$85.00

7 x No. 31 (4<sup>2</sup> - 850 ml) @ \$4.65 ea. New  
\$32.55 Half price: \$16.28

5 x No. 36 (4<sup>2</sup> - 1250 ml) @ \$4.65 ea. new (est.)  
\$23.25 Half price: \$11.63

12 x No. 65 (4<sup>2</sup> - 2200 ml) @ \$9.00 ea. new (est.)  
\$108 Half price: \$ 54.00

9 x Juice bottles (600 ml) @ \$3.75ea. new (est.)  
\$33.75 Half price: \$ 16.90

**TOTAL 157 bottles .....at half price: \$352.56**

### Stainless Steel Lids:

65 x 3<sup>2</sup> lids @ \$15.50 per dozen  
\$83.96 Half price \$41.98

22 x 4<sup>2</sup> lids @ \$19.80 per dozen  
\$36.30 Half price \$18.15

**TOTAL 95 lids ..... at half price: \$60.13**

**GRAND TOTAL FOR BOTTLES AND LIDS:** \$412.69 rounded to \$412.00

**Available from Elmer & Carolyn Kiss:  
6251-3127**



## Early advice for interested organisations

A twelve month campaign will be commencing in April to provide comprehensive scientific evidence of the threats to Australia's fragile soils, rapidly declining native vegetation and loss of habitats, together with expert advice on potential solutions.

The campaign will include a range of seminars and workshops, publications, a frequently up-dated website and research into legislation from all States and the Commonwealth for recommendations to government.

Organisations involved in the campaign preparations include Nature Conservation Council of NSW; Wildlife Preservation Society; NASAA (NSW); the Australian Plant Society.

The Launch seminar on 6<sup>th</sup> April will bring together researchers who understand the threats, how little is being done to combat the problems, and what needs to be done - strategically.

Importantly, details of Australia's first national land and water audit are to be released during the month of March and the scientific evidence coming out of the audit will give great impetus to the twelve months campaign that is being launched on 6<sup>th</sup> April. That information will be supplemented by the simultaneous release of the new State of the Environment report.

Speakers at the seminar have been invited to refer to the results of the national resources audit because they are

researchers who have the ability to describe and discuss the scientific results in plain, every day language - not as specialised categories using esoteric jargon, but holistically, showing the natural connections between vegetation clearing, soil degradation, habitat destruction, biodiversity loss and the implications of that degradation.

The seminar is for people with a concern about these crucial, continuing problems. Following the various presentations on 6<sup>th</sup> April, the final seminar session will provide for discussion of the kinds of activities, displays, articles and so on that groups might like to suggest as part of the twelve month campaign.

Presentations at the seminar:

Stuart Hill; Integrated overview of soil and biodiversity

Brian Murphy; Soils and agriculture

David Butcher; Habitat loss and prevention

Dennis Saunders; Drawing together major issues on biological diversity and soils

John Bartle; Example - vegetation regeneration and soil protection

Pam Hazelton; Engineering / Suburban soils

For information about the seminar and the campaign, contact Graham Clark (02) 9858 5717 or Sean Halse (02) 9279 2466.

## Sapphire Coast Producers

Association Proudly presents the

7<sup>th</sup> Annual

SOUTH COAST FIELD DAY  
SUSTAINABLE LAND USE  
SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Candelo Showgrounds

27th and 28th July 2002

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COAST

Guest Speaker

JACKIE FRENCH  
(other TBA)

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Hugh/Annie (02) 6494 2014

Email: [champagne@acr.net.au](mailto:champagne@acr.net.au)

Exhibitor enquiries welcome.

## Annual General Meeting

Room 4, Griffin Centre, Civic, 7.30pm

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> of March

Reports will be given by the committee on how COGS has performed over the last twelve months.

### Guest Speakers

All positions will then be declared vacant and a new committee will be elected.

### Followed By Harvest Night

Bring produce from your garden to show and share. Stories of gardening successes and failures benefit old and new gardeners alike. This is a great opportunity to ask questions and offer answers.

## ECO MEATS



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Organic Lamb

Organic Pork

Organic Poultry

Organic Sausages

Game Meat

Crocodile

Emu

Goat

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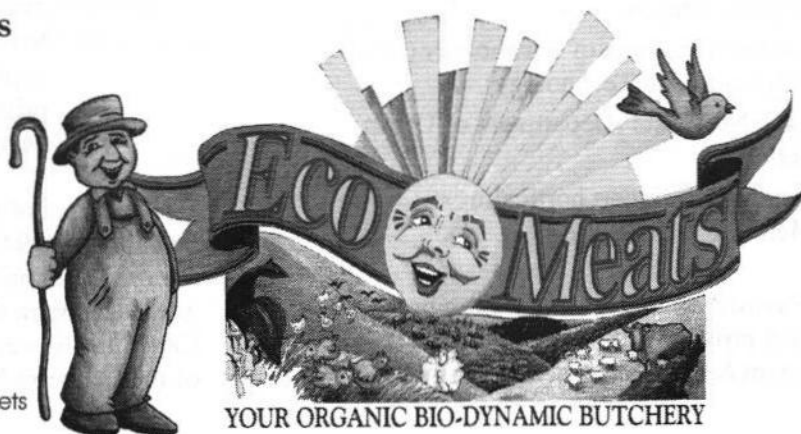
Rabbit

Venison

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YOUR ORGANIC BIO-DYNAMIC BUTCHERY

## An Environmental Education Centre in the Xeriscape Garden-

The Xeriscape Garden Council Incorporated is very pleased to announce that it has been successful in their application through the Community Renewal Program under the ACT Government's Social Capital Initiatives in obtaining **\$28,000** to get under way with the development of the Canberra Community Environmental Education Centre.

The Council has long believed that a building of this nature is necessary to complete the Xeriscape Garden. The Education Centre will increase flexibility of activities that will occur in the Garden and will add to its long term viability.

The Xeriscape Garden Council Incorporated is a non profit community organization devoted to the education and awareness through practical demonstration to our community of four major areas of ecological sustainability.

Water conservation through sustainable horticultural practice.

- i Reusing water to augment existing water supplies.
- ii Recycling of household waste.
- iii Renewable energy.

The Council is a partnership between a number of community, government and private sector companies and individuals.

- Canberra Horticultural Society Incorporated
- Canberra Organic Growers Society Incorporated
- Australian Camellia Research Society
- Organic Origins
- Canberra Institute of Technology (Faculty of Science and Technology)
- ACT No Waste (Department of Urban Services)
- ActewAGL Expert horticulturists: Keith McIntyre, Peter Sutton

The Environment Education Centre project is aimed at providing an all weather sheltered classroom & conference centre for the

dissemination of information on ecological sustainability. It is envisaged that the Canberra Community Environmental Education Centre will be used by schools, tertiary students, educators and their allied institutions, horticultural, conservation, leisure groups, government and private sector companies to conduct seminars, workshops and meetings. The Centre will provide a display, training and meeting area for the general public interested in Xeriscape gardening and allied ecological issues.

### Project Background

The Xeriscape Garden developed initially as an outcome from the community consultation process that was instrumental in forming the ACT Future Water Supply Strategy in 1993. Education and awareness, pricing and innovation were identified as primary methods of managing water demand. The garden at Weston provides the link between these processes and the community at large.

The primary objectives of the Xeriscape Garden are to:

- a. Demonstrate the seven principles of Xeriscape Gardening through which a reduction of water consumption costs to both the community and the consumer can be achieved;
- b. Display a wastewater reuse technology that augments and provides other sources of water;
- c. Demonstrate best practice in applying ecologically sustainable principles to Australian garden design and maintenance.

Development of the Xeriscape Garden since the Opening in 1994 has seen the introduction of a number of community horticultural groups such as the Canberra Organic Growers, Rose and Camellia Growers working under the auspices of the Canberra Horticultural Society. ACT

Waste has a solid waste recycling demonstration area while ActewAGL has developed two additional areas within the Xeriscape site. The first of these demonstrates appropriate plants for under powerlines. The second area called the Green Choice site introduces visitors to the problems arising from global warming and climate change and provides information on the carbon cycle and options for renewable energy.

The Xeriscape Gardens have developed to a point now where it has become a community education centre providing education and awareness on a range of issues relating to ecological sustainability. Individuals often feel remote from environmental issues both global and local. The Gardens provide a forum in which individuals can see that they are part of both the problem and the solution.

The visitor numbers to the Gardens each year is around 5000 - 6000. The Gardens are open to the Public every weekend from the beginning of September to the end of April. Tour groups are taken through the Gardens any time by appointment. Management of the Opening Times is contracted to the Lions Club of Canberra Brindabella and is funded by ActewAGL. The money paid to the Lions Club is then recirculated to other community groups e.g. Cancer Society, Youth Haven.

The Xeriscape Gardens Council Inc. sees a need to build a classroom within the Xeriscape site to further the education process. A place to be used by schools for more in depth project work, community groups i.e. landcare, horticultural groups to run meetings, government and private sector bodies to hold environmental forums and workshops.

The Canberra Institute of Technology (Faculty of Science and Technology) have put up a proposal to construct the building providing project experience for apprentices and students

enrolled in allied courses. The Council then successfully applied for a grant from the Social Capital Fund. The money from the grant will go towards building the concrete slab and construction materials. More than providing the students with valuable work skills the Council are hoping that the project will fully realise the aspirations expressed in the letter from the Department of Urban Services confirming approval of our application. 'The development of an educational centre that will bring together horticultural and environmental groups who can network, socialise and use this facility to educate the community on the principles of these gardens and their environmental issues.'

The environmental education centre is to be located in that area of the Xeriscape Garden immediately north of the Rose Garden and facing on to the GreenChoice site. The first of the preliminary works will be undertaken within the next three weeks. The site requires a drainage system to be constructed to take excess ground water from below the Rose Garden and direct it into the Stormwater Channel. This work will be the first opportunity for all groups to assist.

The CIT Weston is to provide a ditch witch, ActewAGL the pipe and materials. A working bee was planned at the Council meeting in October to expedite this work.

The council will be running fund raising events in the future. The first was in conjunction with the CIT Plant Sale on Saturday 3 November. We sold a selection of plant tube stock, food and ice-creams in the Xeriscape Garden on this day.

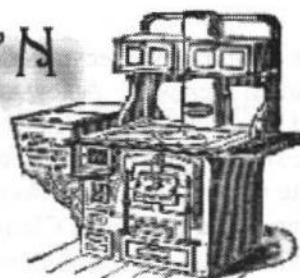
These events and working bees will be ongoing throughout the ensuing years to provide for the maintenance of the building and to engender a caring spirit towards the major challenges of ecological sustainability facing our community.

Pat Makeham



# FROM THE GARDEN TO THE POT

By Conrad van Hest



Recipes from A Recipe For Life (The Gawler Foundation Cookbook) by Dorothy Edgelow

## Bean salad

400g fresh beans cooked and cut into bite size  
150g spring onion chopped  
150g pecorino cheese  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1 tablespoon vinegar

In a bowl place beans, cheese and spring onions. In another bowl add oil, lemon juice and vinegar, whisk with fork till its creamy, drizzle over the salad and toss lightly. Serve with marinated barbeque chicken.

## Beans and peas with angel hair pasta

2 cups cooked broad beans  
2 cups cooked garden peas  
4 rashers bacon diced (or prosciutto or smoked beef)  
250g feta cheese  
2 cups tomato pulp  
1 medium onion diced  
2 tablespoon olive oil  
knob butter  
250g cooked angel hair pasta  
season to taste

In bowl mash the feta cheese with a fork then add enough tomato pulp to make a paste like mix. In a skillet on medium heat,

add oil and butter, then add onion and bacon, cook till soft. Next add beans and peas, mix and heat for five minutes, then add feta mix, combine, then add a sufficient amount of tomato pulp to make the sauce moist. Heat for five minutes. Put the warm pasta in a large bowl, spoon over bean and pea mix. Toss lightly and serve.

## Bean and marrow soup

250g beans top, tail and cut into bite size pieces  
250g marrow diced  
200g shallots chopped  
200g broad beans  
2 ½ cups vegetable stock  
chopped basil and lemon balm

In large pot put in the vegetables and stock, bring to boil and reduce to a simmer, cook the vegetables to al dente style. Serve with melted cheese bread fingers.

## Baked accompaniment

Take one long radish peel and dice, handful of small onions cut into half. Take a dozen large cloves of garlic, leave skin on but remove loose outer skin, place all the vegetables on greased baking tray and cooked in 180C oven for around 30 -35 minutes. Serve with grilled marinated steaks.

# Autumn Vegetable Planting Guide

## Brassicas

Late plantings of Brassicas in March may be successful, but usually Summer plantings are more reliable. It is too late to grow from seed. Take care too with the varieties chosen e.g. it is too late to plant Savoy cabbages, but the smaller ball-headed varieties should be successful

## Peas

Sugar snap peas may be sown in early March for a Winter harvest, but the crop could be lost if there is an early severe frost affecting the blossom Peas sown later in April-May will be ready for a Spring harvest.

## Lettuces

Only plant Winter varieties of lettuces (cos, salad bowl, oakleaf, butterhead and mignonette varieties)

## Leeks

Leek seedlings may be planted early March for small leeks in Winter, although plantings are more reliably made in Summer.

## Onions

Early varieties can be sown in April to early May to be harvested Spring to early Summer. Mid season varieties are often sown late Autumn early Winter and long keeping varieties in Winter. However, the timing of mid or late season varieties is well worth experimenting with by making successive plantings to determine the best time in your specific locality.

## Spring Flowers

Remember that many Spring flowering plants are best planted in Autumn, so that they can establish before the Winter cold, and then start growing in the early warmth of Spring. Stock and poppies can be planted from seedlings in March and perhaps early April others such as Virginia stock, Candytuft, Larkspur and Sweet peas can be sown direct throughout Autumn.

## Green Manures

Autumn is the time to plant green manure crops, which can be dug in Spring, at least 4-6 weeks prior planting your Summer crops.

Benefits of green manure crops are:

- they provide valuable nutrients for successive crops
- they provide organic matter for soil micro-organisms to breakdown;
- they provide sod cover in Winter and
- they help aerate the soil.

Crops suitable planting in Canberra are:

## Legumes:

Broad Beans, Field Peas, Lupins, Sub Clover, Tic Peas, vetch.

## Non-Legumes

Barley, Oats, Rye

**NB.** Legumes are very useful as they fix nitrogen in the soil

Flowering crops need to be dug in before flowering, cereal crops before producing a head of grain.

## Autumn Vegetable Planting Guide

	MAR	APR	MAY
Brussels Sprouts	S	T	T
Broccoli	T	T	
Broad Beans			S
Cabbage	T	T	
Cauliflower	T	T	
Chicory	ST	T	
Chinese Cabbage	T	T	
Corn Salad	ST	T	
Endive	ST	T	
Garlic		S	S
Kale	T	T	
Kohlrabi	ST	T	
Leeks	T		
Lettuce	ST	ST	
Peas	S	S	S
Onions		S	S
Turnips	ST		

S = Seed Sowing

T = Transplanting

**NB.** This table is a guide only, please observe the seasonal weather patterns before deciding when to plant, as there will often be distinct differences in weather from one year to the next. The microclimate of your garden will also influence the times when you plant.

# CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INC.

PO Box 347 DICKSON ACT 2602

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS & HELPERS

### OFFICE BEARERS

<b>President</b>	Keith Colls	6251 7729	keithcolls@optusnet.com.au
<b>Vice President</b>	Steve Sutton	6292 5609	suttonsm@lightningpl.net.au
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<b>Public Officer</b>	Conrad Van Hest	6288 2443	zysyphot@netspeed.com.au

### GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Rosemary Stevenson, Laurie Thompson, Sandra Johnston, Beatrix Bros, Robert Rider

### COGS FLYER

Pilots: Vacant

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

Book sales: Murray Dadds  
Produce table: Vacant  
Supper convenors: Marie Bahr, Mary Flowers  
Librarian: Maren Childs

### COGS REPRESENTATIVES

Environment Centre: Steve Sutton, Deborah Avery  
David Read

### INQUIRIES ABOUT ORGANIC GROWING

Email: [cogs@netspeed.com.au](mailto:cogs@netspeed.com.au)  
Telephone: Elizabeth Palmer 6248 8004

### GARDEN CONVENORS

Cook	Keith Colls	6251 7729
Cotter	Michelle Johnson	6231 6219
Holder	Stephen Dean	04 0335 3118
Kambah	Heather Pearce	6296 6167
Erindale	Christine Carter	6231 5862
Theodore	Dave Read	6294 4001
Queanbeyan	Katrina Willis	6232 9743
Oaks Estate	Rosemary Stevenson	6284 4238
North side	Margie Perkins	6241 6031
Charnwood	Peter Marstin	6254 1278

### COGS ON THE INTERNET

[www.netspeed.com.au/cogs](http://www.netspeed.com.au/cogs) Web Manager: Maren Child 6254 9927  
[cogs@netspeed.com.au](mailto:cogs@netspeed.com.au) E-mail Coordinator: Conrad Van Hest 6288 2443



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Contributions are invited.

Send on diskette (PC format, Microsoft Word files preferred)

or e-mail to [cogs@netspeed.com.au](mailto:cogs@netspeed.com.au).

Otherwise, send clean, typed copy.

There are four issues each year: autumn (February), winter (May), spring (August), and summer (November). The deadline for copy and advertising is 15 January, 15 April, 15 July, and 15 October respectively. Printing is done by Aussieprint on recycled paper. Illustrations courtesy of Joan Buckie.

**COGS monthly meetings** are held on the **4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday** of each month (except December and January) at **7:30pm** in **Room 4** of the **Griffin Centre** in Civic.

~ VISITORS WELCOME ~



# INFORMATION

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Canberra Organic Growers Society is a non-profit organisation started in 1977 with the aim of providing a forum for organic growers to exchange information and encourage society to adopt organic growing methods.

The organic movement endeavours to provide an alternative to the mass of toxic chemicals, fertilisers, fungicides, herbicides and genetic modification used in modern agriculture. Using natural means of improving and preserving our soils produces nutritious, less contaminated food.

Enriching the soil with compost, manure, green manure and mulches, and using companion planting, produces healthy plants which resist pest attacks and disease

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings of members are held in Civic at the Griffin Centre, Room 4, at 7.30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of the month (except in December and January). Each month a different speaker discusses organic growing or related issues, for example:

- backyard self-sufficiency;
- worms;
- permaculture.

After each talk a light supper is available. At all meetings, there is a produce and seed exchange table and a book-stall. Members may also borrow two items from the COGS library.

*Visitors are welcome (donation requested).*

## CONTACT

COGS  
PO Box 347  
DICKSON ACT 2601  
Phone: (02) 6248 8004

E-mail: [cogs@netspeed.com.au](mailto:cogs@netspeed.com.au)

Web: [www.netspeed.com.au/cogs](http://www.netspeed.com.au/cogs)

## FLIER & QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

These publications inform members about the speaker at the next meeting and any other activities coming up. Canberra Organic, the Quarterly publication, contains articles on organic growing as well as tips specifically for the Canberra region, such as a seasonal planting guide. Members are encouraged to contribute.

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

COGS currently operate 10 community gardens in the Canberra area at Mitchell (North side Garden), Curtin (Cotter Garden), Erindale, Charnwood, Theodore, Oaks Estate, Kambah, Holder, Cook and Queanbeyan. Members may obtain plots to grow organic produce for home-consumption. These gardens provide a wonderful opportunity for people to garden with other organic growers, to share their expertise and learn something new at the same time!

At each garden, plot-holders may be required to contribute to the cost of water and other small expenses.

The ACT Government has supported the establishment of these gardens through the ACT Office of Sport and Recreation.

## INTERNET

COGS has an extensive and highly appraised web site devoted to organic growing. The site contains all of the COGS information papers on organic growing, certification information, a page for children, links to related organisations and information sources, a picture gallery, the latest on issues such as genetic engineering, regional information and much much more.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

From time to time COGS organises other activities for its members. For example, we participate in the World Environment Day fair and arrange information days at 'COGS Backyard'. Seminars and workshops are also conducted.

*See reverse side for Membership form and rates*