

# Canberra Organic

## ORGANIC GROWING IN THE CANBERRA REGION

Quarterly publication of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc.

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## CANBERRA ORGANIC

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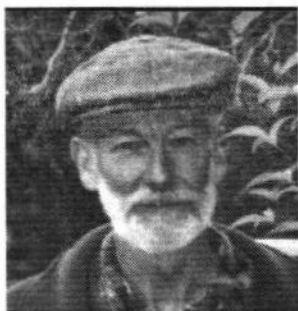
From the Editor

Welcome to the Summer edition of *Canberra Organic*.

Apologies! - A gremlin crept in to the last edition of Canberra Organic and deleted all the formatting instructions (tabs etc) making some articles such as the Spring planting guide difficult to read. Unfortunately the problem was not discovered until after the magazines had been mailed

Already the heat and impending drought are with us. Hopefully we will not have water restrictions this summer. Some of our gardens are bowls of dust in the non irrigated areas, while other gardens have large cracks appearing in the dry ground.

Remember we are always looking for articles and photos from COGS members about the methods you use to grow your produce and your gardening experiences. Half a page to a page would be fine.



## President's Report Summer 2002

There has been a considerable amount of discussion in the media lately about the difficulty non-profit organisations have been experiencing in finding public liability and voluntary workers insurance. Several organisations and events have simply not been able to find any companies willing to provide insurance or the insurance policies have been so prohibitively expensive that volunteer organisations have not been able to afford the premiums. Up until a couple of days before the COGS insurance policies expired it appeared likely that COGS would be in the former category and we faced the prospect of "mothballing" the organisation and closing the gardens. Fortunately, at the eleventh hour, we were able to secure suitable insurance, although at a greatly increased cost, and COGS will be able to continue operating into the future. Hopefully the outcome of negotiations between the ACT government and a consortium of insurance companies will result in affordable insurance being made available to non-profit organisations in the ACT in the future and we will not have to go through the same frantic, nail-biting process again next year.

The spring growing season got off to a flying start and all the COGS community gardens are looking good. The great challenge for this year would seem to be lack of rain. Although all gardens are connected to the urban water supply, ActewAGL has been reported in the media as saying there is a possibility of water restrictions this year if the dry period continues. Water saving measures in our gardens will be extremely important this year, although it is always important from an ecological point of view in a country as dry as Australia. For this reason we have included in this issue a brief description of the rainfall position in the ACT and a summary of measures that gardeners can take to save water in their gardens while still keeping their plants healthy.

All the gardens have started the new season operating under the new garden policy which seems to be working very satisfactorily. There are still vacancies in some of the gardens so if you would like a plot please contact the appropriate convenor listed on page 20. Laurie Thomson and his team have been busily producing seedlings for gardeners and sale at our stalls in a greenhouse generously made available for COGS use by the Nature and Society Forum. A brief description of the aims and interests of the Nature and Society Forum is included in this issue of the magazine on page 15.

Another Beginners Organic Gardening Course is being conducted at present, at the Xeriscape Garden, by COGS in cooperation with CIT Solutions and I am sure will produce another group of keen organic gardeners. Several past participants in these courses have been helping Laurie Thomson keep the "COGS Backyard" at the Xeriscape garden in top condition and a credit to the organisation.

This is the last issue of the magazine for 2002 and I remind members that there will be no meetings at the Griffin Centre in December and January. Meetings at the Griffin centre will recommence in February. The first meeting will be at 7.30 pm, 25 February 2003 and I look forward to seeing you there.

I would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year and thank everyone for their support during the year.

Happy gardening,

Keith Colls

## GARDEN STATUS

### **Charnwood:**

Several vacant plots.

### **Cook:**

Five vacant plots.

### **Cotter:**

No vacancies.

### **Erindale:**

No vacancies.

### **Holder:**

No vacancies, two on the waiting list

### **Kambah:**

No vacancies, four on the waiting list.

### **Northside.**

Several vacant plots.

### **Oaks Estate:**

We have five vacant plots and have a space ready for growing seeds for the seed bank.

### **Queanbeyan:**

Queanbeyan garden has three vacant plots, all 9 square metres.

### **Theodore:**

Several vacant plots.

## COGS Kambah Garden

The COGS Kambah garden has 27 plots – all of which are taken – plus a waiting list of 4 people. The garden is located near the corner of O'Halloran Circuit and Springbett Street, Kambah, just behind the old Kambah Woolshed.

The garden celebrated its first birthday last September and we're still amazed at how much produce the garden was able to generate, given that only a few months earlier it was a barren section of Canberra's "green belt". It's a great testimony to what can be achieved using organic gardening methods.

Most people used Esther Dean's no-dig method to get started, a few of us did it the hard way and dug, and one inventive gardener used wool off the sheep's back (dags and all) as a layer between the newspaper and straw and soil. This particular plot produced the most amazing crop of cucumbers and corn – which only goes to prove that if it's organic it can be used.

Over winter, we were busy adding manures and other organic matter to our plots and trying to grow the usual range of Brassica's. I'm sure we could have fed half of Canberra with the amount of broccoli we grew. I guess knowing how many plants to grow is part of the learning process. You can't say we are not enthusiastic.

There are currently structures of all shapes and sizes being erected in the garden in readiness for summer's climbing vegetables and tomatoes. There is such an air of excitement about the coming season – and the race has certainly begun to have tomatoes before Christmas.

We are also in the process of building a frog pond and lizard habitat. This is to create an area of serenity and to help control the snail population, which is now beginning to appear. We found our first snail only about a month ago – the honeymoon is over!!



Kambah gardens in Summer

Overall, the garden has been very successful. The sense of community that has developed between most of the plot holders has been very rewarding. Given the diverse range of backgrounds of the gardeners it's been wonderful to watch how a garden can bring people together and share their resources and help each other. It's also made my job as Convenor much easier.

On behalf of all of the

Kambah gardeners, I would like to pass on our thanks to COGS for making it possible to learn about, and put into practice, the principles of organic gardening in such a great environment, and for its support and provision of resources.

If you're ever in the area and someone is in the garden please feel free to drop in and say hello.

Heather Pearce

Convenor—COGS Kambah garden



## Learning About Organic Growing Through WWOOF.

The best way to learn what will work and what won't in organic growing is to try it out first hand. The WWOOF program gives you the opportunity to experience a practical farm-stay holiday where you can learn the techniques and processes of organic farming and receive food and full board, in exchange for your labour. For new Wwoofers, there is a range of WWOOF hosts in Canberra, including Piallago Apples, an organic apple orchard on Beltana Road run by Robin and Jonathan Banks. As it is with many WWOOF sites, workers at Piallago Apples stay in the family home and help through a variety of tasks around the farm. WWOOF brings into contact likeminded farmers and community members from around the world to the ultimate benefit of the organic movement, by propagating the knowledge and skills of organic production.

### What is WWOOF?

WWOOF is an acronym for 'Willing Workers On Organic Farms', and is a movement likened to a cultural exchange. The WWOOF organisation is one which has grown markedly in the past years, both internationally and within Australia. It aims to give interested members of the public the opportunity to experience organic farming and life in the countryside first hand. Host farms offer to teach Wwoofers aspects of organic growing, bio-dynamics, and permaculture, as well as supplying food and full board, in return for approximately four to six hours of work per day, six days per week, or as negotiated. Through the circulation of Wwoofers, the program aids the communication of ideas and initiatives in organic growing, as well as supporting the organic movement, which, unreliant upon manufactured herbicides, pesticides, and fertilisers, is a labour intensive system. To join up, potential wwoofers must register with WWOOF Australia, or the international WWOOF program (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms). They then receive a non-transferable single or double membership which includes basic insurance to cover accidents that may occur while they are working, and a list of the registered host farms and their activities.

### The Story of Piallago Apples.

There are several WWOOF farms in the Canberra region. Piallago Apples is an organic orchard on Beltana Road near the Canberra Airport. In season, the owners Jonathan and

Robin Banks sell A-grade organic apples and other produce - tomatoes and silver beet, plums and quinces and peaches. They bought the farm in 1984 as a conventional orchard and were classified as 'Organic in Conversion' for the next ten years. Their problem was Coddling Moth. "Although traps are effective for a small number of trees, such as you might have in the backyard, they do not work in the scale of a large orchard," Robin says. Therefore the Banks' used a growth inhibitor specific to Coddling Moth larvae to combat the problem. In 1996, however, they turned A-grade Organic with the introduction of the parasitic wasp *Trichogramma* to their property. *Trichogramma* lays its eggs inside the eggs of the Coddling Moth, where the larvae hatch and feed, thus destroying the life cycle of the moth.

### WWOOFING and Piallago Today.

Piallago Apples has been welcoming Wwoofers since soon after they were certified, having heard of the WWOOF program through organic farming publications. From October through to April there is always something for Wwoofers to do at the orchard. Most Wwoofers stay at Piallago for one or two weeks where they are given simple tasks such as mowing, digging, planting and watering. Normally people join WWOOF without prior farming skills and many Wwoofers at Piallago come from overseas - in fact, for the past couple of years up to fifty per cent of their workers have been men from South Korea. There are also many British Wwoofers coming through, often traveling in small groups. A bedroom in the family home is set aside for wwoofer accommodation, and there is also a caravan if necessary. This is pretty average lodging for most Wwoofing farms, depending on the resources available.

### How to Start WWOOFING near Canberra.

To start your Wwoofing adventure, it is important to become a member of WWOOF. In Canberra you can join at the WWOOF Australia agent in the Canberra Environment Centre, Kingsley St, Acton, or you can join online at the WWOOF website, [www.woof.com.au](http://www.woof.com.au). The membership fee of \$50 single or \$60 for a couple traveling together pays for basic insurance to cover accidents that may occur while you are working on the farm. All host farms must also be

members of WWOOF, and although WWOOF Australia does not have the resources to visit all farms listed, any legitimate complaints from workers or hosts should be relayed to the central WWOOF organisation. Once you receive the WWOOF booklet it is up to you to read through the lists of addresses and descriptions and to initiate contact with any hosts. The WWOOF website also has much useful information for the first-time Wwoofer, with hints and commonsense advice. For example, always contact the host beforehand and do not turn up at a farm without warning. And offer to do the dishes once in a while!

Wwoofing is a great initiative to promote organic growing world-wide. Travelers learn a variety of skills and can see first hand how well, or otherwise, different organic systems work in practice. They can travel relatively cheaply throughout all the states and territories in Australia and through many countries around the world, bringing with them ideas and skills from other farms. In return for their skills and hospitality, farm hosts receive volunteer labour and a diverse range of visitors from many backgrounds and nationalities. Wwoofing is a great idea for anyone wishing to really find out about Organic growing and how it works.

Josephine Close.

## Postcard from Byron Bay

It was a totally delightful; totally busy six days at the Seed Saver's Network in Byron Bay where Michel and Jude Fanton were tutors, hosts, and bons vivants and seed savers extraordinaire.

Well – I had their book (the Seed Saver's Handbook), and had picked up information from their web site detailing the course which Michel and Jude run twice a year in their hectare property at Old Bangalow Road, Byron Bay, in April and October.

*Magic!*

There was a structure of course, Jude being the English teacher she once was in a distant past of "crow eating".

Here is the chronicle:

1. Why sow seeds and what seeds?
2. How to select and save seeds;
3. How to clean and store seeds;
4. How to swap seeds;
5. Introduction to Development;
6. Development work over a short period;
7. Development work over a longer period.

Work abroad in developing countries was the theme. Indeed, the course was entitled "Seed Saving Course: Preparation for Working in Seed Saving and Permaculture Projects Overseas".

There was just so much glorious stuff it was hard to digest – from basic botany to saving techniques, from chooks in the Solomons to heritage in Ladakh, India.

In particular, I enjoyed the exercise in the saving of clumping bamboo for which the Fantons were growing fifteen varieties.

Then there were cultural nights. Tony Jansen had established "Kastom Gaden" in the Solomons so we learned about his trials and tribulations

there. A Solomon Islander, Gwendolyn, was on the course.

C'est la vie. There was a French night – red wine and Camembert with taro, to songs by Josephine Baker; and a Stefo night, Steve the bon vivant from Milton who cooked and paraded.

To the nitty-gritty. The Fantons have been saving seeds, developing a library and encouraging household production for two decades.

They have good library – an internet connected network and a fundamental love of their profession. They reinforced the cycle, which is necessary to protect our planet – from seed to seed really. Biodiversity is fostered; self-help is developed; nature is nurtured; and reliance is begun again.

It certainly was not all study. We shoveled compost, planted leeks, saved some dill, built raised beds and planted taro in its loop.

If you have time, go on the course. I loved it – and I shall try and grow clumping bamboo in Canberra.

Beautiful Byron Bay was a bonus.

Garry Ridgway  
November 2002

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E-mail: [info@seed.savers.net](mailto:info@seed.savers.net)

# The Seasonal Outlook and its Impact on Water Usage

By Keith Colls

As many of you will be aware there have been media reports of predictions by ActewAGL that the likelihood of a dry summer may lead to water restrictions in the ACT for the first time in many years.

Gardening is responsible for much of the water consumed in the ACT and in view of this it is probably timely to consider some steps we can take, both at home and in our community gardens, to reduce water usage and wastage.

Water saving is also a financial issue. As many gardeners know a large proportion of this year's plot fees has been held aside for paying water bills. While some of the COGS gardens do not have water meters at present and COGS is unlikely to billed for their water use in the coming quarter, meters can be installed very quickly and easily.

Government representatives have already

indicated to us that profligate use of water by gardens (as occurred in some gardens last year) will, if it continues, definitely result in COGS being charged substantially more for water usage.

This growing season is starting from a very dry base. As those of us who have been preparing new seed saving plots in the COGS gardens have found out there is very little sub-soil moisture this year, unlike a usual year where we usually have reasonable rainfall during the winter and spring months. This lack of a subsoil moisture reservoir will mean that our plants may require more water earlier in the season than usual, not at all helpful if water restrictions are being considered.

The Bureau of Meteorology rainfall figures for Canberra Airport for the winter and spring months make it very clear why there is so little sub-soil moisture.

<i>Month/Year</i>	<i>Rainfall (mm)</i>	<i>Average (mm)</i>
<b>2001</b>	500.0	630.0
<b>January 2002</b>	26.4	61.9
<b>February 2002</b>	211.0	52.9
<b>March 2002</b>	40.8	52.7
<b>April 2002</b>	21.2	50.1
<b>May 2002</b>	27.0	48.6
<b>June 2002</b>	40.8	39.7
<b>July 2002</b>	16.8	42.0
<b>August 2002</b>	22.8	47.2
<b>September 2002</b>	58.4	52.6
<b>Six months to 30/9</b>	187	280.2
<b>Year to 30/9</b>	465.2	447.7

2002 started with dry conditions. Only 500mm was received during 2001 compared with an average yearly rainfall of 630 mm. Although Canberra's rainfall to date this year is a little above average, this is somewhat misleading because of the exceptionally high rainfall we received in February, four times the monthly average. For the remainder of the year, except for June and September when

rainfall was about average, the rainfall has been much below average with less than half the average monthly rainfall for most months. Clearly there has been a long period of below average rainfall which has resulted in low soil and sub-soil moisture.

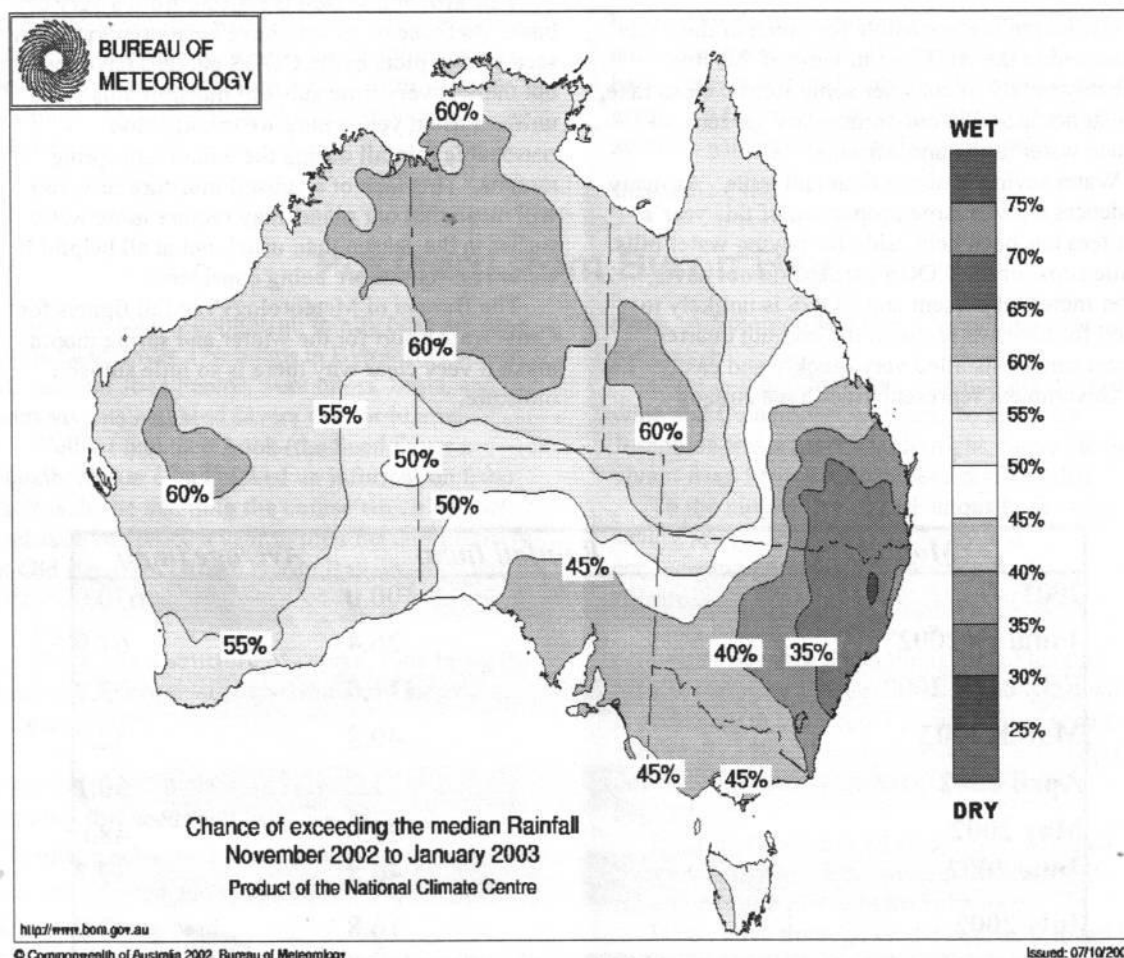
Furthermore, the Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook provides very little optimism that the situation will improve until at least next autumn.



The map below provides the probability of exceeding the median rainfall in the period November 2002 to January 2003. The probability for the ACT is between 35% and 40%, that is, there is 60% to 65% probability that the rainfall in this period will be less than the median (in the ACT,

median rainfall is not much different to average or normal rainfall but this is not the case in areas such as central Australia where rainfall is very low and highly variable).

Note; this map makes no estimate of how far below normal the rainfall may be.



Higher than normal temperatures are also usually associated with lower than average rainfall and this is likely to add to the moisture availability problem worse by increasing evaporation.

Clearly it is important that we try to use water in our gardens as efficiently as possible, both from a financial perspective but also from an ecologically sustainable living point of view. Efficient use of the water we have will reduce the need to increase water storages and avoid the ecological problems this can cause. Given the weather outlook for the coming season, it is especially important that we use water as efficiently as we can this season. We all know that the use of compost and mulching is a great help in reducing moisture loss from our gardens but there are also other ways of reducing water usage. These are summarised in the article below which is a reprint of the COGS handout

*When to Water.*

#### WHEN TO WATER:

When watering the vegetable plot it is worth ensuring that one gets maximum benefit from the water applied.

When using can or hand held hose, water individual plants thoroughly, rather than watering whole area. For plants which need regular water, sink an empty plant pot down to soil level (say 12cm) next to these plants and water into this. This takes water straight down into the soil where it is needed and stops soil being washed away from around plant.

If using a sprinkler, a good soak once in a while is far more beneficial than a little and often. Check the soil after you have watered to see how deeply the water has penetrated - you may be surprised at the amount needed to make any real impression on a dry soil.



Do not over water with a sprinkler though, as the action of water droplets can damage the surface structure unless it is rich in organic matter. Trickle irrigation, which comes in various forms of leaking hose pipe, is much kinder to the soil structure and is much less wasteful.

Seedlings and young transplants should never go short of water but once established their need can vary considerably.

**BROCCOLI, BRUSSELS SPROUTS, KALE:** Once established if widely spaced these crops should survive without watering.

**CABBAGE:** If soil is dry, a watering of 18 litres/sq metre two weeks before harvesting will give best value. Don't overhead water or heads will split.

**CAULIFLOWER:** Lack of water in early stages can cause small, premature curds.

**CELERY, CELERIAC, FLORENCE FENNEL:** A good supply regularly otherwise they will be tough or bolt prematurely.

**CHINESE CABBAGE:** Needs a large and regular supply of water. Not advisable in dry areas.

**CITRUS:** Need heavy watering once a week.

**FRUIT TREES (FLOWERING):** Need heavy watering once a week.

**LETTUCE:** Water well, especially 7-10 days before harvest.

**MARROWS, ETC:** Unlike other fruiting crops, watering the growing plants encourages rather than reduces the crop. For maximum cropping keep moist from start to finish, increasing water as cropping starts. Try not to overhead water if subject to mildew.

**ONIONS:** Too much water delays maturity and reduces keeping quality. Only water in very dry conditions while plants are establishing.

**PEAS & BEANS:** In early stages don't water unless soil is very dry as this encourages lush growth and delays cropping. Watering when plants

begin to flower and pods are swelling will increase the crop.

**ROOT CROPS:** General watering. Only water when soil is drying out. Too much water will encourage leaf growth at the expense of roots.

Water shortage: roots will survive better than most crops in drought. Try not to let soil dry out completely, or roots will tend to split when water is finally applied.

**SPINACH:** Will rapidly run to seed in dry conditions. Silver beet is more tolerant of dry conditions and NZ or Warrigal spinach is quite resistant to drought.

**STRAWBERRIES:** Keep picked, mulched and watered. Mark good producers for new plants for next season and remove plants with mildew or rust.

**TOMATOES:** Once established do not water until flowering starts. Less watering will reduce number and size of fruit but these should be tastier. Try not to allow to dry out completely, once fruit set.

**TOMATOES, EGGPLANTS & CAPSICUM, SWEET POTATO & CLIMBING BEANS:** Will hold their blossoms and keep producing if soil is cool.

The following additional information should be borne in mind:

- When the soil has warmed up, mulching will also improve the water-holding capacity of soils.
- Well-composted soil holds water better and doesn't dry out as quickly as unimproved soil.
- Tree roots will tend to "follow" water so don't start your vegetable patch too close to large trees.
- Remember that Australia is a very hot dry country, so in addition to the advice in this article, follow your commonsense and observe the health of your plants.

*The information in this article on the watering needs of specific plants was developed from information supplied by the Henry Doubleday Research Association.*

## COGS Herald

Compiled by Conrad van Hest

### ORGAA merges with NASAA

The Organic Retailers and Growers Association of Australia at their general meeting on July 23, 2002 passed a motion to merge with the National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia. This merger in the future will form an well-integrated organic chain from the producer through the processor and retailer, to the plate.

*NASAA bulletin August 2002*

### Australian Organic Farming video

Quoted from the web page - "The great thing about the video is that it allows farmers involved to tell their own story on why they went organic, how they went about it and whether it has been a viable move. The video covers such diverse farming enterprises as organic cattle, sheep, poultry, pigs, grain, fruit and vegetables."

For further information and purchase of the video go to

[www.ozdocs.com/environmentVideos.htm](http://www.ozdocs.com/environmentVideos.htm)

### Australian Community Foods web site

[www.communityfoods.com.au](http://www.communityfoods.com.au)

Quoted from the web page - Australian Community Foods web page is an information and facilities gateway for people interested in healthy, local food. There are two sections one for growers and one for food consumers, an interesting site worth looking at.

### Percy Schmeiser has one more fight

Having lost before the Canadian Federal Court of Appeal, Saskatchewan farmer Percy Schmeiser will seek to take his case to the next highest level – the Supreme Court.

The judge ruled that Schmeiser infringed the patent on the canola Monsanto genetically engineered to resist glyphosate, the active ingredient in it's Roundup herbicide. If a farmer has just a mere presence of the patent plants it constitutes an infringement of the patent law.

If Schmeiser loses the Supreme Court ruling, then he he has lost the battle for farmers all over the world and their right to use and save their own seeds.

It would mean "total control of the seed supply by multinationals like Monsanto, which has found a way to do it and that through patent law."

An extract from Cropchoice newsletter 9/9/02. Further stories can be found at [www.cropchoice.com/](http://www.cropchoice.com/)

### Comment

We should all consider supporting our local seed networks and help save seeds to keep a pool of locally open pollinated seeds. Why should we let multinationals patent nature it belongs to every man, woman and child worldwide, patents should be applied to things that are created in a laboratory not what occurs naturally.

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## Un-natural neighbours

One of the contentious issues associated with genetically engineered (GE) crops is the possibility of contamination, or cross-pollination. Proponents of GE crops argue that buffer zones can provide adequate protection while opponents and sceptics are worried that there can be no guarantees and that organic farmers stand to lose markets if their crops are contaminated.

The contamination issue was at the heart of legal action this year in Canada in which the world's biggest commercial provider of GE crops, Monsanto, sued farmer Percy Schmeiser after its Roundup Ready canola was found growing in his fields. He hadn't paid the company a fee to use the product. Mr. Schmeiser said that was because he hadn't planted the canola, it had drifted into his fields. He lost the case.

Monsanto is facing growing resistance in Europe and Brazil to its GE crops but it still looking to Australia for expansion. The company applied in June to the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) for a commercial release of GE canola in Australia. It also has two applications before the OGTR for field trials of GE canola in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

The company wrote to hundreds of Australian farmers asking them to lobby the Federal Government in support of its GE canola crops.

GeneEthics director Bob Phelps has expressed concern about the potential for GE canola to escape from its designated sites. He cites reports from the OGTR showing canola is an invasive weed, has pollen that infects other crops over long distances and sheds seeds that can lie dormant for five to 10 years.

Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA) Co-Op spokesperson Scott Kinnear said the OGTR would not look at the economic impact of a commercial release and has urged the states to address this critical issue.

The OGTR has already granted licences for the commercial release of GE cotton in Australia, but in September it refused to grant Monsanto Australia Ltd a commercial licence for the Northern Territory because of concerns about the cotton turning into a weed in tropical areas, and

the potential to cross with native cotton species in these areas.

Monsanto Australia had applied to release GE cotton in up to 80 shires in current cotton growing areas of NSW and Queensland and potential cotton growing areas in Queensland, northern Western Australia and the NT over three years.

The OGTR granted commercial licences for the release in southern Australia, from March next year, and approved further field trials of the GE cotton in northern Australia to enable more information to be gathered on the behavior of GE cotton in this part of the country.

The OGTR in October approved the release by CSIRO of GE cotton into the environment for commercial evaluation. The cotton has been engineered to tolerate insecticide and/or herbicide. The releases will involve a total of 6.5 hectares over six sites in the shires of Narrabri and Moree Plains in NSW. The releases will take place between October this year and April/May of next year.

The expansion of cotton growing, GE or otherwise, should be a matter of concern in a Australia given the country is still struggling to come to terms with how to make the best use of limited water supplies, including ensuring environmental flows in stressed river systems.

Here in Canberra, we have our own unnatural neighbours. The CSIRO is a big player in GE crop research and has been conducting several trials in sites in Canberra. Trials of GE clover, barley, wheat and peas have been conducted at Ginninderra and Acton, since June last year and are being monitored until June next year.

Information about trials and applications for commercial licences can be found at the OGTR website: <http://www.ogtr.gov.au> or phone 1800 181 030.

GeneEthics and Greenpeace Australia have published the *True Food Guide* to help consumers select non-GE foods. For free copies, contact GeneEthics Network on 1300 133 868 or Greenpeace on 1800 815 151 or visit <http://www.greenpeace.org.au/truefood>

Katrina Willis

## THE TEN LAWS OF GARDENING!

1. Nothing ever looks like it does on the seed packet.
2. Your lawn is always slightly bigger than your desire to mow it.
3. Whichever garden tool you want is always at the back of the shed.
4. The only way to ensure rain is to give the garden a good soaking.
5. Weeds grow at precisely the rate you pull them out.
6. Autumn follows summer, winter follows autumn, and drought follows planting.
7. Evergreens go a funny shade of brown in the winter.
8. The only way to guarantee some colour all year round is to buy a garden gnome.
9. However bare the lawn, grass will appear in the cracks between the patio paving stones.
10. "Annuals" mean disappointment once a year.

## ECO MEATS



### Specialists in Organic Pesticide-Free Meats

Organic Beef

Organic Lamb

Organic Pork

Organic Poultry

Organic Sausages

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Crocodile

Emu

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Venison

*Just the way Mother Nature intended!*



YOUR ORGANIC BIO-DYNAMIC BUTCHERY

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## Good News for a change Hope for a troubled planet

**Authors David Suzuki and Holly Dressel**

Wow - so much positive information in one book.

All you seem to read these days is how we are doing the wrong thing for the environment. If we don't change our attitude we are going to cause the destruction of our planet. Well this book is different. It has many accounts of how people are caring for the environment and making a living at the same time. It provides us with examples of how people are changing things.

David and Holly tell us about a family company that is logging timber sustainably on a 126,000-acre forest in Pennsylvania since 1855. Local groups of farmers that have got together and decided that the new intensive ways of farming with tractors and hybrid seed does not produce as well as the traditional ways that their ancestors used for generations. They have reverted back to the traditional ways and

prospered. The many accounts show how peoples the world over are finding ways to live and support their families while not harming the environment. It is not only local people but some of the largest companies in the world are changing their ways as well.

The book will whet your appetite to want to know more about some of the projects and this is possible because in a lot of cases whole books have been written about them. If you want to find out more they have listed at the back of the book where they found most of their information. You could spend months if not years checking out some of these.

In summary four hundred pages of information to inspire you to do something positive.

Review by Steve Sutton

### HELP!!!

Thanks to those who have volunteered to distribute the magazine for sale to our regular outlets but we still need help with the production of *Canberra Organic*.

At this stage we still need volunteers to write or chase up articles. Now is your big chance to become immortalised in print by writing an article for the magazine.

We are also in dire need for people who get their kicks from soliciting advertising. At this stage we have no articles or advertising for the next issue.

Please remember that volunteer organisations such as COGS can only function through the goodwill and effort of volunteers. If you would like to help in anyway at all (whether related to the magazine or not) please talk to a member of the committee. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated and you will be rewarded by a warm fuzzy feeling.

### People keep asking how do you get rid of weeds organically?

*well it's not that easy, but try these!*

- The best organic way is to pull the weeds up and either put them in the middle of a compost heap so the heat will kill the seeds or place them in a plastic bag and leave out in the sun for a couple of days and when they are quite dead, use them as mulch
- don't let the weeds go to seed as this will be next years crop of weeds
- lots of mulch on top of your garden will deter weeds from growing
- poor hot salty water over the weeds, use a watering can, (pool salt is the cheapest)
- When mowing your lawn, set your mower to mow your lawn higher
- black plastic, thick layer of newspaper or old carpet over the affected area, weighed down with a few bricks, (carpet is known to leach chemicals into the soil, leave that one up to you?)

## AROUND THE HOUSE AND THE GARDEN

compiled by Conrad Van Hest

### A slug of coffee

Next time you see slugs on tomatoes it might be worth offering them a flat white! Scientists at the US Department of Agriculture in Hawaii have found that caffeine is an effective slug and snail killer. They say that a strong cup of coffee sends the garden pests into uncoordinated writhing, before killing them. Concentrations as low as 0.01 per cent will put slugs off their supper (a cup of instant coffee has a concentration of about 0.05 per cent caffeine). It is not yet known why the caffeine works, but it is now being considered for development as an alternative to conventional chemical based pesticides.

*ABC Gardening Australia magazine October 2002*

### Weeding out

Invent a new mousetrap and you could become an instant millionaire!

But it is unlikely that the latest weed killer will attract wealth, it's common vinegar. It has been known to have a detrimental effect on plants and is coming back as an organic alternative.

Studies have found that 5 to 10% vinegar killed many weeds and a 20% concentration killed off top growth in two hours. Common household vinegar has 5 to 7% concentration. The vinegar ingredient that does the damage is acetic acid, normally used by the good bacteria in the soil.

*Garden Gossip, OGFS Tasmania August 2002*

### Question and answers

**Q** - I am down on the south coast and have a neighbour who is keen to find somewhere in ACT, NSW or Victoria where they can buy some green lacewings to do battle with their white spider mites. I can't seem to be able to find anything on the net for them, could you help it would be much appreciated. *H. Bega*

**A** - Green lacewings and other beneficial insects and products can be purchased from The Beneficial Insect Company [www.thebeneficialinsectco.com](http://www.thebeneficialinsectco.com) and from Goodbugs [www.goodbugs.org.au/](http://www.goodbugs.org.au/) *CVH*

**Q** - I have redbacks growing happily in my worm farm, what organic way could I rid them from my garden? I've got young children and I'm concerned that they might get bitten. So, far I've just squashed the redbacks which I have done but I do not think that it is an effective way of ridding a yard of redbacks because it does not squash their young as their eggs are resilient to such treatment.

A friend has told me that an effective treatment to rid one of redbacks is to spray capsicum juice, is that true or a lovely fairytale? *K.W.*

**A** - In my research squashing is one method and another is to destroy the nest and keep areas clean. Do any readers have any other suggestions. *CVH*

## News from Canowindra

By Sam Statham

This years October long weekend heralded the inaugural Organic Farming Open Day in the Central West of NSW. Hosted at Rosnay Organic Farms, at Canowindra, the day showcased the growing organic movement of farmers and consumers, in a heartland of intensive agriculture - the Belubula Valley.

On a perfect Spring day, the producers began arriving early, setting up tents with the ease of regular Farmers Marketers. Karen and Mark Haeartsch, who grow certified organic herbs and vegetables at Canowindra and now run the Cowra Farmers Market, were the first to arrive, with a delicious display of food for tastings.

But the Open Day is different to a Farmers

Market. Selling produce is secondary to the basic acts of meeting, tasting, talking, relaxing, and appreciating organic food and farming. It's almost the reverse - farmers going to market is replaced by consumers coming to the farm. Hosted at Rosnay Organic Farms, visitors took tours of certified organic vineyards, olive groves, a market garden, and a straw bale house. All day long groups were taken on a 2 hour tour, looking at worms and insects, tasting herbs fresh from the earth, smelling the sweetness of good compost.

Over 130 people turned up on the day, many from the local area, and many driving from Canberra, Sydney, Newcastle and beyond.

Entering the Statham family garden, they were treated by local organic farmers with:

- Delicious organic vegetables from Rosnay grower Russell Morris. Apart from the seasonal veg (silverbeet, spring onions, radish etc), the dried chillis were a big hit
- Freshly picked organic herbs and veges from Karen and Mark Haeartsch, from down the road, who brought their usual, but were also showcasing, for the very first time, their new organic feta cheese (to die for!)
- Soothing, "spiritually enhanced" Oolong Tea from Jen Shuen Farm. This Buddhist network of farms produces organic food for the Australian Buddhist community. The main farm is at Gallston, Western Sydney, with a new one under development at Billimari, near Cowra. An exception to the rule, this tea is not certified - but if you can't trust your local monk, who can you trust?
- New season, organic asparagus from the rich alluvial soils of Cowra, the source of Australia's finest asparagus. William and Rebecca Bennett ran out in the rush for more tastings.
- Boutique organic wine and brine pickled kalamata olives,
- Locally cold pressed mustard oils were tasted from Yandilla Mustard Oils. As the mustard crop was grown at Rosnay last year, it was still special!
- Lamb like we'd never tasted before - spit roasted organic Dorper lamb from Mark Heinzell. Mark has a beautiful biodynamic farm at Eugowra, and he even brought a few of his tame, wool- shedding South African sheep for us to see.
- Natural health supplements, extending the organic movement to health and lifestyle... We all learnt much from the healthful insights of Phillip Blowes, who had a range of his natural health supplements.
- Permaculture, cooperative buying and sustainable living was also on show with members of the Cowra Permaculture Group, who gained several new members to their new Organic Food Buying Group.

For more info call Terry Wilson on 0414 832654 or 62861169

## Nature and Society Forum

The Nature and Society Forum has generously provided COGS with access to one of their greenhouses for the production of seedlings for COGS members. The greenhouse is very conveniently located next to the Xeriscape garden and Laurie and his team have been busily beaver away producing seedlings for our stalls and gardeners. For more information on this activity contact Laurie Thomson on 6288 7161. Following is a brief description of the work of the Nature and Society Forum.

### *for healthy people on a healthy planet*

Nature and Society Forum is a non-profit community-based organisation that aims to promote the health and well-being of humans and the natural environment through:

Improving understanding throughout the community of the processes of life, the human place in nature, and health and environmental issues facing us today

Encouraging informed discussion and debate about the practical meaning of such understanding - for individuals, families, organisations and for society as a whole communicating the outcome of its activities as widely as possible through publications and the Internet

### Background

Nature and Society Forum (NSF) was formed by a group of people who believe that:

- The present patterns of human activity globally, and in our own society, are not - ecologically sustainable, and the survival of civilisation and the well-being of humanity will require significant changes in these patterns.
- Gross inequities exist in the conditions of life and health status of different sections of the human population, across the world and within nations. This situation also calls for major changes in society.
- The societal changes necessary for the achievement of sociological sustainability and improved health and equity will not come about unless/until there is greatly improved understanding, throughout the community, of the processes of life and of the human place in nature and of the environmental and health issues facing our society today.
- Such understanding is unlikely to be brought about through existing societal institutions
- There is therefore a need for a new kind of public institution/organisation in our society that can promote such understanding and facilitate informed discussion and debate about ecological and health issues..

## Plant Profile - Beans

An ancient food in the new world. The peoples from many parts of this earth have embraced the bean and integrated it into their culture and cuisine.

The very large selection of bean shapes, flavours, and colours all grow in each different type of bean. Climbing or Vining, Semi-vining and Bush or Dwarf are the different types of the growing bean plant. The selection of beans range from:

- Green beans, which are eaten as a complete bean with its pod.
- Wax or Butter beans, in Australia the reference is to the colour of the bean, not its texture.
- Purple beans, which revert to green when cooked.
- Shelling beans; the seeds are separated from the pod and cooked.
- Dried beans; all beans can be dried beans, although some are grown particularly for this purpose. Beans, which are dried can later be re-hydrated, either by long soaking or instant cooking in water. Flour is also milled from the dry bean.

For joy and pleasure, abandon planting in rows. Pre-soaking of the seed can take place overnight. Sow the seed to a depth of three times the seed's length, directly into the earth, after the last frosts. Otherwise, early plantings can take place in pots, if there is a protected and warm environment. Keep the seed moist. Continue regular planting, until late summer, growing different types and varieties, which in turn will produce a consistent supply and exciting gardening.

Beans will thrive where the earth has much organic matter and compost, this will aid in retaining moisture and allow the roots to breathe. Beans do not like acid soil, a ph. level of 6.5 - 7.5 can be reached by sprinkling dolomite, wood ash and/or lime. This provides the earth with essential elements, which the plants need.

Dolomite provides the salts of Calcium and Magnesium.

Wood ash contains highly water soluble Potassium. This high water solubility is a good reason to not flood the land. Including a raised bed and a mound where the seeds are to be sown, cultivate to 50cm.

Lime provides Calcium Carbonate.

Bean plants do not like to be left dry. Encourage strong growth by installing a drip irrigation system, giving the plants deeper soakings every few days as opposed to a lighter watering every day. Deep watering will promote a strong deep root system. Good drainage is essential.

Bush beans do not need support. The plants are nearly mature by 60 days.

Climbing beans require a support of up to two metres, depending on the variety and the condition of the soil.

For most varieties harvest will take place before 90 days. To ensure succulent beans, do not allow them to become too big, unless harvesting for dry beans.

Dry beans for seed or soups are left on the bush until brittle or until the bush dies back, which then can be turned upside down for further drying, before opening the pods to continue its drying for a further two weeks. These beans can then be stored in an airtight container in ambient conditions - this seed will then be viable for over two years and can be eaten for a good many more.

Feeding of the plants is important, particularly when the bean is in flower, and setting fruit. All beans are self-pollinators. A low nitrogen mix of worm juice, castings and leaf mould every week from flowering will ensure a large crop.

A healthy crop will improve resistance to pests and disease. Steps towards a good crop are companion planting, a very close eye and immediate appropriate action. Borage helps repel bean fly or bean mites. Interplant carrots with beans. This apparently reduces fungal problems when the carrots are about 12cm high. Nasturtiums repel whitefly and bean fly when grown under beans. Grow beans up plants such as Corn and Sunflowers, increasing yield space and encouraging pest predators.

Virus, fungus and bacterial diseases? Yes, beans can be affected. Prevent humid conditions by watering at night. Water the soil, not the leaves. Remove aphids by hand, or with jets of water. Have other plants going to seed in the garden. Take snails and slugs for a long hike.

Lastly, beans are a most important food and a most important plant.

As good for the earth as they are good for us.

My wishes are for you to enjoy your garden & enjoy the crop.

Daniel McLindon



## FROM THE GARDEN TO THE POT

By Conrad van Hest

### Pumpkin Humming Cake

1 ½ cups plain flour  
3 teaspoons baking powder  
pinch of salt  
1/3 cup castor sugar  
½ cup vegetable oil  
6 egg yolks  
400g pumpkin cooked and mashed  
2 drops vanilla essence  
6 egg whites  
pinch of cream tartar  
½ cup caster sugar

In a bowl sift together the flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. Blend in the oil, egg yolks, pumpkin and essence, and mix well.

In a separate bowl beat the egg whites, cream of tartar and sugar until very stiff. Fold meringue in to the mixed ingredients and stir until blended. Pour into greased cake tin and bake for 1 hour in a preheated 180C oven. Remove from the oven and cool on the cake rack, when cool ice the cake.

### Tomato and Lemon Slices

100g plain flour  
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda  
½ cup dehydrated tomatoes chopped roughly  
100g rolled oats  
4 tablespoon lemon juice  
100g butter  
100g demerara or brown sugar

Mix flour with bicarbonate of soda, tomatoes and oats, blend well. Place lemon juice, butter and sugar in a pan and heat gently until butter is melted. Stir into the dry ingredients and mix well to blend.

Spoon into a lightly greased 18cm (7 inch) square tin and level the surface. Bake in preheated moderate 180C oven for 15 – 20 minutes.

Leave to cool in the for 5 minutes, using a sharp knife mark into twelve slices, allow to cool then remove from the tin.

### Orange, Sunflower Kernels and Honey Cake

100g butter  
2 tablespoons honey  
3 tablespoons orange juice  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
200g flour  
½ cup sunflower kernels  
½ cup orange peeled and diced  
1 egg beaten

In a bowl sift flour and baking soda, add egg, sunflower kernels and orange, mix well.

In a saucepan add butter, orange juice and honey and place over low heat until the butter is melted., add to dry ingredients and mix well.

Place into lightly greased cake tin and bake in a preheated 180C oven for 45 minutes.

Remove from the oven and cool in the tin.

## COGS Seedlings

Each Spring COGS produces punnets of vegetable seedlings and advanced tomato plants for sale to members and the general public. These seedlings are sold at stalls we have at the Green Living Fair, the CIT Plant Sale at Weston and at our monthly meetings.

In recent years these spring seedling sales have been the main fundraising effort of COGS for the year and have contributed significantly to our income. As with all our ventures, enthusiastic volunteers are the key to success.

This year some of our regular seedling growers are too busy elsewhere in their lives, so we are looking for new helpers.

The seedlings are currently being sown and help is needed to look after the growing seedlings until the sales.

If you would like to contribute to this fundraising activity please contact Laurie Thomson 6288 7161, or a member of the Committee to find out what is involved.

## Whatever Happened to the Manure?

by Betty Cornhill

As many of you will know by now the manure and straw from the Show ground this year was all straw with just a whiff of manure. Right now I must tell you that the COGS committee offered this year to payout \$500 to get two loads of manure for each of the new gardens and for Charnwood, and as usual I was asked to organise this. For 12 years now I have done this for the Cotter Garden, who always pay for their own and usually get 4 loads at \$50 a load.

For reasons too complicated to explain in this letter, my efforts to obtain the manure were met with frustration at every turn and after I had wasted nine days hanging about hopefully at the Showground, I was told we could not have any as it had all been bought by Canberra Sand and Gravel. I thought about it overnight and decided to ring the General Manager of Canberra Sand and Gravel, a very pleasant man, who, with a little persuasion, agreed to deliver 2 loads to each of the new gardens and also to Charnwood, as agreed between Keith and myself, at \$50 a load, and after that he would discuss Theodore with me.

This took the next three days with me leading the truck drivers to Charnwood, Cook, Holder and Kambah, unlocking the gates and waiting for them to bring the second load.

After that, at the Cotter Garden, I noticed the loads were getting smaller. Then I was told there was no more left for Theodore. On contacting the General Manager again we agreed on a price of \$100 for one load of the compost they had already made up out of the straw and manure they had received.

Clearly there is an increasing recognition of the value of straw and manure, which is

reassuring from an organic point of view, but it has resulted in COGS being unable to compete financially with commercial buyers who use the straw and manure for making compost.

Now I have a plan: because Citiscap spend the first week after the show cleaning up the area near the grandstand for the Trots, they leave the manure till the second week, but during the first week people with trailers, but not trucks, are allowed to collect manure by hand.

I have done this for years, not with a trailer, but by filling feed bags, tying the tops, and transporting them in my car. It is easy to barrow the bags to my plot and empty them onto my compost heap.

I suggest that each garden ask any plot holder who has a trailer to use it for this purpose, during the first week after the show. Extra volunteers will be needed to fill the trailers, but the Cotter Garden cleaned up after an equestrian event last year and got many trailer loads of pure horse manure this way.

So let's organise ourselves to transport our own manure!

*Note: As President of COGS I would like to put on record our appreciation of the enormous effort Betty put in this year after the Canberra Show obtaining straw and manure for the gardens. I would also like to endorse Betty's suggestion that next year gardeners, particularly those with trailers, collect the free manure from the showground themselves as it is unlikely that COGS will be able to compete financially with commercial buyers.*

Keith Colls

The Committee of the Canberra Organic Growers Society  
wish you and your family a





## SUMMER VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE

In Summer it is a good idea to mulch your garden beds to help keep the soil cool and moist. One experiment has shown that a 4cm layer of straw reduced evaporation by 73%. Be careful however not to lay down a thick layer of sawdust or lawn clippings that can pack down to form an impenetrable barrier to water.

Soil with lots of compost will contain all the nutrients your plants need for strong, healthy growth. In addition it will retain water and act like a sponge to keep your plants moist through the dry summer days.

On days of extreme temperatures your plants may need to be physically protected from the heat. This can be achieved by covering the plants with shade cloth secured on a frame e.g. weld mesh bent over to form a tunnel (secure the shade cloth with some pegs).

Try not to have water on the leaves of plants that are susceptible to fungal diseases e.g. tomatoes, cucumbers, pumpkins, zucchinis. Preferably water with drippers, or if you must use overhead sprinklers, water in the cool of the morning so the water can evaporate during the day.

Keep those weeds down. They compete with your plants for food, water and sunlight. It is best to tackle them when they are small - before removing them becomes a backbreaking and exhausting exercise.

Pests can multiply over summer. Don't reach for the pesticides. Observe if there are natural predators present, remembering that there will be a delay between the appearance of the pest and the subsequent build up of its predators. If you must spray, use an environmentally benign spray. Read books such as Jackie French's *Natural Pest Control*.

Make sure you harvest your crop regularly - in most cases this will encourage your plants to continue cropping and you get to eat your produce at its peak.

Remember to leave space in your veggie patch for those winter vegetables that must be planted in late summer - early autumn. Brassicas and other winter crops need time to mature before the extreme cold of winter sets in.

### Summer Vegetable Planting Guide

	DEC	JAN	FEB
French Beans	S	S	
Beetroot	S	S	S
Broccoli	ST	ST	T
Brussel Sprouts	ST	ST	T
Cabbage	ST	ST	T
Cauliflower.	ST	ST	T
Carrots	S	S	S
Celery	T	T	S
Chicory	S	S	S
Chinese Cabbage	S	S	
Cucumber	ST	T	
Endive	S	S	S
Kohl Rabi	ST	ST	T
Leeks	S	S	
Lettuce	ST	ST	ST
Marrows	T		
Parsnips	S	S	S
Potatoes	S	S	
Radish	S	S	S
Silver Beet	ST	ST	T
Squash	ST		
Swedes		S	S
Sweet Corn	ST	T	
Tomatoes	T	T	
Turnips		S	S

S = Seed Sowing

T = Transplanting

Notes: 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 summer weather from one year to the next.

Planting times will vary for different varieties of the one vegetable e.g. December plantings of heading lettuce should be successful, February plantings should be the butterhead varieties.

**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
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### GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Beatrix Bros, Heather Gill, Daniel McLindon, Heather Pearce

### COGS FLYER

Pilots: Vacant

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

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

### COGS REPRESENTATIVES

Environment Centre: Deborah Avery  
 David Read

### INQUIRIES ABOUT ORGANIC GROWING

Email: info@cogs.asn.au  
 Telephone: Elizabeth Palmer 6248 8004

### GARDEN CONVENORS

Cook	Keith Colls	6251 7729
Cotter	Andy Hrast	6288 7262
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
Northside	Richard Larson	6241 3024
Charnwood	John Turnbull	6254 3070
		04 1966 3440

### COGS ON THE INTERNET

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Keith Colls  
 Conrad Van Hest  
 Victor Oates  
 Stephen Dean  
 Maren Child  
 Conrad Van Hest

**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**





## Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc.

# 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 2602

Phone: (02) 6248 8004

E-mail: [info@cogs.asn.au](mailto:info@cogs.asn.au)

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

### 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 operates 10 community gardens in the Canberra area at Cook, Charnwood, Curtin (Cotter Garden), Erindale, Holder, Kambah, Mitchell (Northside Garden), Oaks Estate, Queanbeyan and Theodore. 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 are required to contribute to the cost of water and other small expenses.

The ACT Government has supported the establishment of these gardens.

### 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, organic suppliers and information sources, regional information and 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' at the Weston Xeriscape site. Seminars and workshops are also conducted.

*See reverse side for membership form and notes*