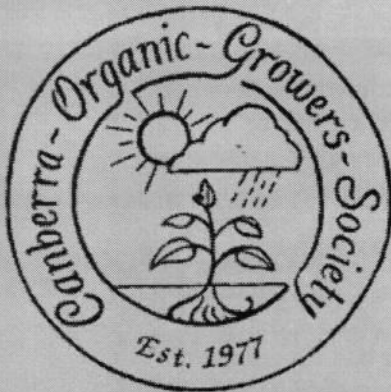


Winter



POPOVIC

Canberra Organic

**ORGANIC GROWING
IN THE CANBERRA REGION**

Quarterly publication of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc.



VOL. 12 NO. 2

Winter 2004

CANBERRA ORGANIC

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Janet Popovic

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Contact Janet Popovic 62582811
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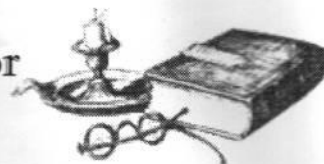
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1/2 page	\$36 (\$30)	\$120 (\$100)
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From the Editor



Hello again,

In this issue it's good to be able to publish a letter
to the editor from COGS member Keri James—
and thank you Keri for the additional material you
have provided for this issue! Feedback is
something that your Committee needs to ensure
that COGS meetings, representations, members'
activities, community gardens and *Canberra
Organic* are providing what you want from COGS.
We are always looking for material from members
for *Canberra Organic*—how about a vegetable
profile based on your good or bad experiences in
growing it, some photos of your organic growing
successes, or some useful information you have
gathered from your reading? Just be mindful that
there are copyright laws and we cannot publish
copyright material unless you also provide
permission from the copyright holder!

Mindful of the need for feedback from the COGS
membership, the new COGS Committee elected at
the AGM on 23 March has prepared a survey that
is published in the central pages of this issue for
you to complete and return. Please take a few
minutes to add your comments as well as tick the
boxes. The Committee will report back to you on
your responses at general meetings and through
this magazine. We would like to make your ideas
gathered though the survey central to the planning
meetings that the new Committee will be
holding—and the coming year's activities.

Part of the Committee's feedback to you is to
publish in this issue the Committee report to
COGS members and the COGS Inc. audited
Financial Statements for the year ended
31 December 2003 that were presented to the
Annual General Meeting in March. These reports
are part of our statutory obligations. We also want
to be able to ensure that the efforts put in by the
volunteers who are your COGS Committee and
helpers are effective and productive in tending and
growing the COGS you want.

I hope you enjoy the articles and photos included
in this issue.

Janet Popovic

Thanks to Arthur's Vegetable Clipart



President's Report Winter 2004

This report is being created less than 12 hours after I was elected as President of the Society so it is going to be somewhat lacking in the statements of vision and mission which might be expected from a Presidential statement. Perhaps next edition when I have got things more in hand.

It behoves me to start by thanking Keith Colls for his work as President of the Society over the past three years. His efforts to welcome us back into COGS after our spell in Tanzania were both appreciated by us and indicative of the efforts he has put into the Society. I have large shoes to fill.

It was an honour to be elected and a pleasure to meet the other members of the Committee—both the experienced members and those, like me, somewhat newer to roles in the Committee. I look forward to an interesting, and hopefully entertaining, period of service.

A point which has occurred to me is that when thinking of the word "President" most people probably relate to politicians of one sort or another. I'm not a politician and tend to have a fairly dim view of most members of that species. However I do recall from the early 1960s the thrust of some words of President John F Kennedy: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

As far as COGS goes he nearly got it right. At the risk of mixing the metaphor completely I'd suggest this should be a matter of "Not only ... but also". It is quite right that people should consider what COGS can do for them (and the Committee discussed last night some ways of tapping into the answers to that question – more of this later). However it is important that people also contribute back to the Society. There are many ways in which that can happen including physical work (eg working bees at gardens), mental activity (e.g. writing papers for this magazine), and less formal contributions through attending meetings and participating in discussions. Again I'll get back to these issues in later articles.

Because of my newness to the job I don't have a great deal of Presidential activity to report. I will however follow up on a couple of points Keith raised in the last issue of the magazine. He commenced with a comment that the Spring and Summer weather had been better this year than last. Unfortunately that situation has not continued, with rainfall far lower than last year (at least at Cook Community Garden)

and some rather warmer weather in late summer. Looking for a positive this will hopefully extend the productive period for crops which have managed to survive the drought, and the warmer soil will give a good start for winter crops and green manures.

He also wrote about the program of talks planned for the monthly meetings. This was also discussed at the April Committee meeting and while a few of the proposals have yet to be "nailed down" before we can publish the details, I agree with Keith's assessment that an interesting and varied program is being arranged.

I'll conclude with a few points about myself and my background, more or less in reverse historical order.

A key point is that I'm married to Frances who is the Technical Director of our plot at Cook Community Garden. I am more the gopher in that team. I have retired from the Australian Public Service after some 30 years working for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (for the last 10 years in the Census). I am keeping a professional interest in census taking and from time to time do consulting work in developing or emerging economies on that topic. My work in the census included some time with John Allen, who introduced us to COGS in about 1998. We held a plot (or two) at Mitchell for 2 years and have now taken up a plot at Cook.

My initial academic training was in agriculture through the University of London before a need for occasional sunlight led me to emigrate to Australia. I was brought up in a gardening household as my dad ran a market garden specialising in bedding plants in Winter and glasshouse tomatoes in Summer. I can still remember the joys of picking a ton of tomatoes in a day with the temperature in the glasshouses over 50 degrees Celsius. Despite that background I still search for Moneymaker each Spring and still reckon they are one of the tastiest varieties!

I hope you all enjoy the next 6 months eating the product of your work over the past 6 months!

Martin Butterfield



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		Back cover—Globe Artichoke, COGS Green Manure Mix, Broccoli: all at Cook Community Garden Winter 2003, photos by Janet Popovic	

For Sale:

- 1 opened bag of sand, 25kgs, \$5.00
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- 2 bags of Supercharge, mineral fertilizer @\$15.00 ea
- 1 bag of Black Magic, cow manure, \$ 3.00
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- 1 compost bin, side doors \$15.00

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Around the Gardens



Charnwood

Charnwood garden has vacancies.

Cotter Garden

Despite the very dry conditions gardeners have achieved good results with a wide range of plants. There is some earlier than normal movement towards the winter "close down" because of the big dry.

We have had a box trailer donated to the garden but as it is unregistered its use is restricted to the garden only.

Discussions have been held with our horse paddock neighbours about the development of the now abandoned orchard in the former horticulture station. Some pruning of the trees has already taken place and the next steps will involve the fencing off of the orchard from the horses. There is a wide range of established, if neglected, fruit trees in the orchard that with care could become productive. However our knowledge of how to manage fruit trees organically is limited so if there are people from other gardens that could assist with knowledge or are interested in becoming involved with the orchard please let me know. There is some expected movement of gardeners over the next few months that will result in some plots becoming available.

Andy Hrast

Dickson

Dickson Garden has a vacancy.

Beby Bros

Erindale

Towards the end of February drunken louts pulled down about thirty feet of our garden's fence. Somehow they even broke several concrete posts and we were left with what seemed like a huge gaping wound. The government housing department came to our rescue and their maintenance blokes did a fine job in repairing the damage. All we have left to do is to paint the palings so you'd never notice the difference between the old and the new.

Mick Crowe organised a tip truck to collect and deliver a huge load of Canberra Royal Show livestock bedding. Thanks to Mick we now have plenty of mulch and compost material to keep us

going for a season or two. At the moment we are clearing up spent summer vegies while also planting autumn crops.

There is one lonely plot that could flourish if it had someone prepared to be a reliable friend and caretaker. If anyone is interested I'd be happy to arrange an introduction!

Christine Carter

Kambah

We currently have 6 vacant plots plus another two or three that have been relinquished, but which current gardeners have decided to take over until such time as there is a waiting list of prospective gardeners. Due to the extreme dryness and dreadful watering hours, especially for those of us with families and/or who work full time, the interest in the garden has diminished greatly. We are in the process of trying to weed and clean up several vacant plots which were relinquished. I hope then to run a small promotion to try to attract new members – this may be hard with the ongoing drought. Several members have displayed great commitment, regularly assisting with mowing the grass, picking up rubbish, and patching up fences after vandals cut into them. These members have had fantastic gardens, full of healthy produce.

Shirley Irvin

Northside

See the feature on Northside community garden (Mitchell) on pages 8-9.

Queanbeyan

Railway Park garden is coping with the dry weather, and most gardeners have managed to grow some good produce, including fat pumpkins and tasty late-ripening cherry tomatoes. We have just two plots vacant at present.

Katrina Willis



Letter to the Editor

Some more 'water thoughts'

To the Editor

This letter needs to be prefaced with acknowledgement that my gardening days are young and my knowledge is by no means complete. However, after reading Martin Butterfield's account of the Cook Garden's rainfall records and accompanying analysis of the irrigation required by vegetables (with much interest), I feel like sharing some 'water thoughts' too.

Are gardeners using grey water at home for garden purposes? Could any excess be practically transported to the garden (community) for use there? Are people catching the run-off in the shower with buckets? Putting dishes out in the rain for drinking water? Has everyone got a rain tank

(subsidy available from the Government for installation or DIY)? Could we realistically try to grow vegetables that require less watering, not more? How about investigating bush tucker plants native to the area that need no watering at all! Every tap in the house and yard can have a receptacle for catching the drips and hand-washing water. Concerned about soapsuds etc? Swap to an organic, friendly variety, or better yet, do without. Every 5 minutes in the shower costs 50 litres. It's really amazing how little water a human actually needs. So it should be entirely feasible to keep being self sufficient in the garden, whilst also complying with the restrictions, easily.

Yours sincerely,

Keri James (Scullin, ACT)

28 February 2004

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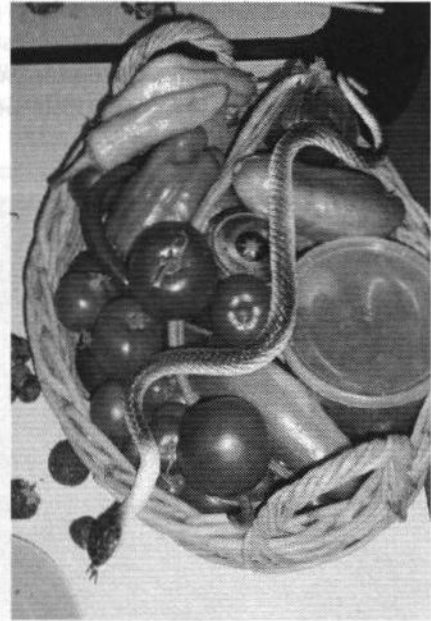
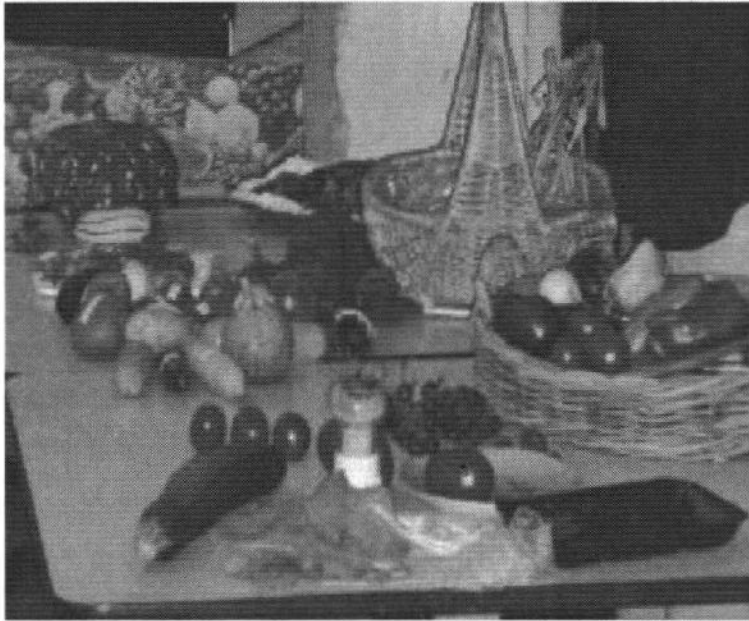
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YOUR ORGANIC BUTCHERY

COGS Autumn Harvest Night



The photos above are of produce brought by COGS members to the COGS Harvest Night Meeting on 24 February 2004. The photo on the right is Ben Bradey's basket of goodies complete with one of the rubber snakes Ben used to discourage birds from raiding his ripening fruit and vegetables (see page 8 of this issue).

Photos by Martin Butterfield.

Beautiful Holiday House



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Northside Community Garden

Northside Community Garden at Mitchell was opened for use in August 1996 on land provided by ACT government. This followed resumption of the Watson Community Garden lease in June 1996 when future development of its site at North Watson was proposed.



Many of the resources at Watson were transferred, such as some of the fencing, the climbing roses at the gate, the shed and sixteen fruit trees. Approximately twelve of these fruit trees survived the move and this year for example, in spite of water restrictions, good crops of apples are developing.

This secluded garden is a large one. It runs along the valley floor in a roughly east west rectangle with entrance through the west end. There is little shelter at this end except for a low grassed hill, so winter winds are inclined to whistle



down the length of the garden which is much frostier than the old one at Watson. Along the north side is a band of planted mature eucalypts under which is the shed and other garden tools, nicely shaded from the sun in summer. Outside the fence on the southern side is another stand of similar eucalypts which give some protection in

the colder months, and, no doubt, gobble up garden water.

So crops seem to mature late at Mitchell. Early sowings are often wiped out by frosts not experienced elsewhere. Runoff from heavy rains funnel through the garden.

Cattle live on three sides and can often be seen browsing the fence line and looking longingly at the greenness within. Kangaroos will shelter under the trees outside and move around freely on dull days. Myriads of small birds, such as blue wrens, help keep unwanted small predators off the plants, while flocks of choughs and other larger birds - mostly black ones - will often visit and forage in the mulch for interesting food. I have never seen a snail or slug at my plot and give credit to the birds. Unknown visitors will leave evidence of their forays, parts of tomatoes,



mangled broad bean pods, diggings in garden edges and other signs which I am sure all COGS community gardeners know well. In hot weather, the odd brown snake can be found entangled in protective netting on individual plots, and some real-looking artificial ones have been introduced in an attempt to discourage the birds from digging up seedlings and eating the raspberries as they ripen! There are even magnificent snake beans hanging from the vines in the plot of Ben Bradey, the new Mitchell Garden convenor.

The soil is apparently not as good as that at the Watson garden, but has been worked on over the years and much improved. Down the central and lowest section of the garden is a greener, lusher band, probably the result of underground water at the bottom of the valley. The couch grass loves it.

Northside Community Garden ... continued



Plot holders have grown an amazing variety of fruit, vegetables, flowers and herbs, and used a number of different growing and irrigating practices to do so. It is interesting to walk round, see the variety, wonder what some of the plants are and see what techniques are being used.

Berry fruits thrive. Raspberry crops each year are magnificent, even when there is a drought, while strawberries grow abundantly in the lower parts of the garden. Red, black and white currants have been less successful.



Most plots being worked seem to contain at least one predator repelling plant, so the gardens harbour a selection of wormwoods, pot and African marigolds, tansy, mints, rosemary and other aromatic groundcovers. Flowers which have been grown, with varying results, include cornflowers, Echinacea, perennial and sweet peas, larkspur, lavender, dyer's greenwood and sunflowers.

This year, cucurbits are doing well, as are tomatoes. Beans have suffered, specially those requiring cooler conditions to crop, such as

scarlet runners, while semi tropicals, like the snake beans have enjoyed the heat.

Only one building (except for our garden shed) can be seen in the distance across a field, behind a screen of trees. The view is of undisturbed hilltops, grassy paddocks and a few country fences. The predominant sounds are from birds and from rustling leaves. Traffic is far away.

It is hard to believe that we are almost in the middle of the national capital.

There are good plots available at Mitchell and



the existing gardeners would welcome any new gardeners wishing to take up a plot or two next growing season. Mitchell garden is ideally located for residents of Gungahlin and the Inner North.

Robin McKeown

Photos: Northside (Mitchell) community garden vistas and delicious produce. Photos by Ben Bradey.



A Glimpse of the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show 2004

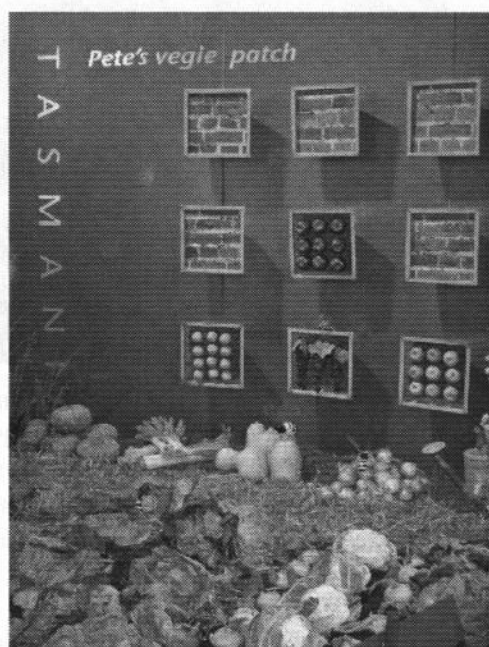
I was fortunate to catch the last day of the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show held in the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens March 31-April 4, 2004.

There were marvelous floral displays in the pavilion, in the Carlton Gardens infrastructure and in purpose-built display plots. It was good to see that space was also given to vegetable plants along with the flowers in each of these settings. And there was quite a lot of information that had an organic focus, together with product samples.

There were stalls, display gardens and art, photographic and sculpture exhibitions along with live entertainment, and thousands of people, including lots of family groups, were there to enjoy the atmosphere, feast on the exhibits, soak up the array of ideas presented and bargain hunt for plants, bulbs and garden accessories.

It was fun and I'd recommend the experience if you get a chance to see this show another year!

Janet Popovic



Photos above by Janet's daughter Christine Beaton:

Left, top and bottom: Pete's vegie patch (Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens) display in the Exhibition Centre as part of a Tasmanian promotion.

Right, top: Part of the Sustainable Gardening in Australia ornamental and productive vegetable garden outdoors display.

Right, bottom: The central display garden at the Carlton Gardens entrance to the Exhibition Centre featured luscious lettuce, silverbeet and nasturtiums.

... more Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show

Asthma Friendly Garden/ Low Allergen Garden

The Asthma Foundation of Victoria in conjunction with Urbaneco Australia provided advice/ a display of low allergen plants.

Suggested low allergen plants

Native grasses—rice or weeping grass, kangaroo grass.

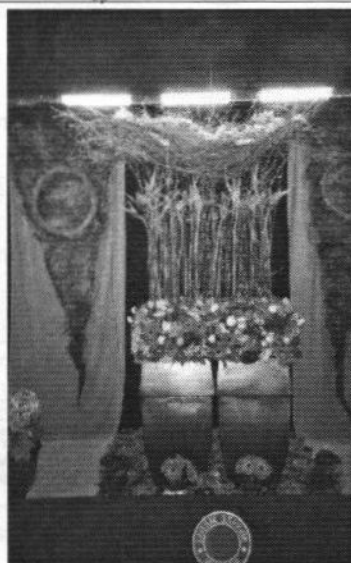
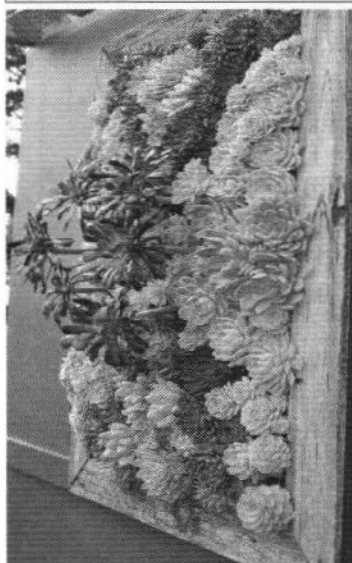
Ground covers—thyme, kidney weed (native), native violet, prostrate rosemary, Canterbury bells.

Herbs—chives, dill, basil, thyme, sage, mint,

fennel, horseradish, marjoram, oregano, parsley, rosemary. But NOT chamomile, wormwood.

Flowers—anemone, columbine, impatiens, lobelia, pansy, alyssum, snapdragon, cornflower, daffodils. But NOT chrysanthemum, calendula, marigold.

This information is taken from the pamphlet "The Low Allergen Garden." For lots more information about asthma friendly plants see this pamphlet on The Asthma Foundation of Victoria website, www.asthma.org.au.



Photos Above: More indoor (centre) and outdoor displays/ performance (top right) at the Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show. Photos by Janet Popovic and (far left) by Christine Beaton.

Jim's Great Garden Survivors—from Jim Fogarty at the Melbourne IF&G Show:

Low-water grasses such as festucas, carex and miscanthus. **Silver-foliaged plants**, most of which are tolerant of drought and coastal positions. **Succulents** such as the senecios, echeverias, cotyledons and agaves. **Eucalyptus caesia**, the white-trunked gum, with brilliant pink to red flowers. **The smoke bush** (*Cotinus coggygria*) - stunning foliage. **Sword-leaved NZ flax** (phormium). **Euphorbias**—not fast growing, but well worth the wait. (From p13 Official Program)

Contacts for some exhibited products and services with an organic (not necessarily organically certified) focus—

Sustainable Gardening in Australia
www.SGAonline.org.au

Amgrow Organix, makers of organic fertilizers, soil improvers and natural protection products
www.amgrowgardenking.com.au

Biogreen Products Pty Ltd, products include certified products
www.biogreen.info


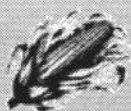








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Junior Organic Puzzle Page

Winter Vegetable Ups and Downs

FINISH				
				
				
				
				START

Play this game like snakes and ladders with two or more players, a counter each and dice—the vegetables are either frost hardy and therefore good vegetables to grow in Canberra's Winter or too frost tender for Canberra's winter so should be grown in Summer. The code below tells you whether you can move forward or take a penalty.



Tomatoes are frost tender—go back to the start.



Garlic needs the cold—advance 5 spaces and have another turn.



Broccoli survives Winter well—advance 3 spaces.



Eggplant needs lots of heat—go back 5 spaces.



Corn needs the warmth—miss 2 turns.



Cabbage can grow in Winter—advance 1 space.



Plant Spinach at the end of Winter—just wait for your next turn.

Designed by **Janet Popovic**

Thanks to Arthur's Vegetable Clipart for the images

Notes on Bushtucker and Plants for Revegetation in the A.C.T./ S.E. NSW Region

Keri James has been doing some reading on bushtucker and plant species suitable for local revegetation and has provided the following notes to share with Canberra Organic readers. JP.

Endemic Selection of Bushtucker for the ACT/ SE NSW Region*

- Small Leaf Raspberry – *Rubus parvifolius* - fruits in summer and autumn
- *Lomandra longifolia* – Mat Rush – leaf bases and seeds
- Some different acacias – *Acacia mearnsii*, Green wattle – seeds and gums (Jackie French recommends *Acacia retinoides* (Wirilda) or *Acacia victoriae* (elegant wattle), especially good for windbreaks, 2-5 metres tall. Ripe seed in late summer and autumn, wattle blossom also edible).
- Mountain Pepper – *Tasmania lanceolata* seeds, leaves and berries
- Bulrush/ Cumbungi – *Typha* spp – Rhizomes and pollen
- Spike rush – *Eleocharis spachelata* rhizomes
- Geebung – *Persoonia* spp – delicious fruits
- Native Cherry – *Exocarpus* spp – fruits
- Various mushrooms – *Fistulina hepatica*/ Beefsteak, roasted
- The tubers of Murnong/Yam Daisies – *Microseris lanceolata* – and also of various lilies and orchids (including Fringed, Vanilla)

*This information came from an article by Paul Dann in a Greening Australia magazine. He teaches at TAFE. He was able to grow a Bunya

nut tree this far south by wrapping its trunk every year in winter with a doona!

For even more comprehensive information about local bushtucker growing along the coast, two great books are:

- Geebungs and Snake Whistles – Koori people and plants of Wreck Bay, by the community and Cath Renwick;
- Nature's Larder, by RJ Hardwick

(The fruits of 'Pigface' are especially recommended.)

Revegetation in ACT/ SE NSW

For anyone interested in revegetating a patch of bush or their own garden to its original eden, Greening Australia has excellent information about collecting seeds, and lists of flora species. Here is a selection:

Local species for woodlands revegetation

- Yellow Box – *E. mellidora*
- Red Box – *E. polyanthemus*
- Kangaroo grass – *Themeda australis*
- Wallaby grass – *Danthonia* spp.
- Spear grass – *Stipa* spp.
- Silver wattle – *Acacia dealbata*
- Billy buttons
- Pink birdweed
- *Plantago varia* (Plantain)
- Common woodruff
- Grey guineaflower shrub
- *Cryptandra* bitter shrub

A local guru for information and endemic seedlings from her backyard nursery is Gwyn Clarke of the Australian Plant Society.

Contributed by Keri James

Garden Regeneration Project

(Canberra Urban Parks and Places with Phoenix Garden Group and Chapman Residents Action Group)

The following information about regeneration of Canberra gardens after the Canberra bushfires is taken from the Garden Regeneration Project Newsletter and reproduced with permission.

As at February 2004, 272 gardens had registered since the project started—133 had been helped and 10 of the 139 awaiting Project involvement were scheduled to receive assistance shortly.

The Project volunteers in February included 37 adults - 6 with trailers and 35 students from Canberra Boys Grammar and Radford College. The type of gardening assistance is changing from a focus on regeneration of fire-damaged gardens to assistance with the establishment of new gardens as houses are rebuilt. For assistance or to volunteer, ring Nina on 6207 0142 or email nina.stahl@act.gov.au.

More autumn produce from community gardens



Photos by Martin Butterfield

This is Autumn produce from the Butterfield plot at Cook community garden.



Martin says:

"The chillies (above left) are as follows: Huge red—Anaheim; medium red one [top right of picture]—Jalapeno ; yellow jobs—Aji yellow; little red—Siam. We are also growing Cayenne and Habanero (not pictured). The Habanero—small capsicums full of napalm, in particular have been very slow to set fruit but look to have finally organised themselves. The garden pick lot (above right) was just what we gathered one day in mid-March. This was only about 2 days after Frances had done a thorough job on things."

NARA

The Australian
NARA Home Food Dehydrator
 NARA PRODUCTS, PO Box 103, Latham, ACT 2615
 Phone/Fax: (02) 6254 4559 Mob: 0428 544 565

- ✦ Makes tasty dried food
- ✦ Versatile – will dry fruits, fruit leather, vegetables, meat & more
- ✦ Easy to operate & reliable
- ✦ Dried food is healthy, there are no unwanted chemicals
- ✦ Value for money!

The NARA Home Food Dehydrator is manufactured here in Canberra. Service & general advice are easily accessible. It has a proven and efficient design.

★ Enjoy the full flavour and quality of dried produce ★

☎ RING FOR MORE INFORMATION AND PRICES (10% discount for COGS members)

Moldovan Gardening

A wintery tale

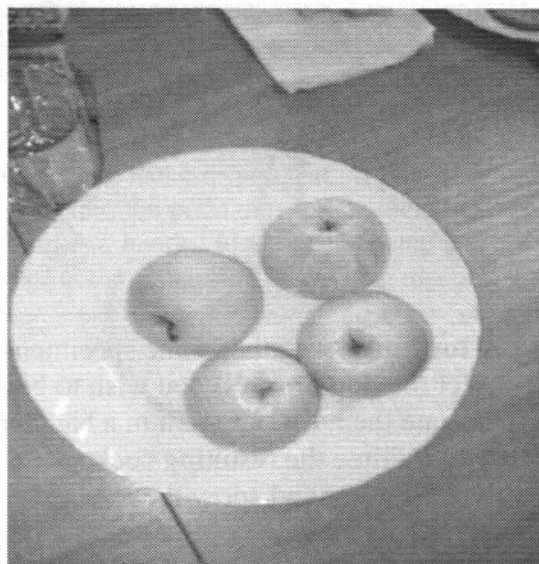
I recently undertook a 2 week trip to the Republic of Moldova. This is a small country nestled between Romania (to the West) and Ukraine (on the other three sides). Prior to the disappearance of the Soviet Union it was one of the Republics within that system.

The country's great natural asset is very fertile black soil. The soil is referred to in Russian as "chernozem" which caused my interpreter much difficulty in finding an English equivalent until he discovered that the word had simply transferred. As a result of this good soil, and a location in the South of the USSR the country had been a great exporter of fruit and vegetables to the North under the old regime: this has decreased considerably and the country is regarded as one of the (economically) poorest in Europe.

However the agrarian interest still holds. Most of the people I spoke to discussed the climate in terms of the last frost interfering with the blooming period of this or that fruit crop (cherries, peaches and apricots seemed to be the main victims of late April frosts). Certainly on a field trip to the East of the capital (Chisinau) many hectares of fruit trees and (particularly) vines were observed. In terms of interest in horticulture, Chisinau was the only city I have visited with a 24 hour flower market in all seasons (*see photo below*).



I was told that anyone who wants a plot of land to grow crops could apply for one and be given it. On the field trip we went past a small river valley with a bunch of sheds and small shacks which I was told was one of these communal gardens: people from the city travel the few kilometres out to grow their own crops in the way (more or less)



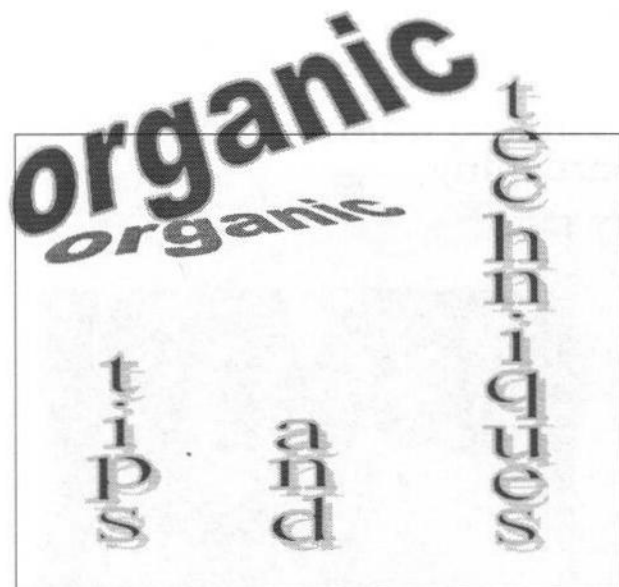
familiar to us. It is probably rather "more" than less. When I described our 60 square metre plot to one of the Moldovans he commented that this wasn't enough: we needed 500 square metres to do it properly! Tractor hire is quite common in these areas!

As the weather was having trouble losing the concept of "Winter" most of the fields were white rather than black and I didn't see much activity. However a display of agricultural activities in the Natural History and Ethnographic Museum appeared – the text was in Russian, of which I know little, and Moldovan, of which I know less but guessed some from its similarity to Italian – to be exhorting the masses not use chemicals on the crops. Certainly a number of people commented how their fruit tasted so nice "because they didn't use many chemicals".

Was the food nice? It was excellent! For most meals the main dish was ordered with separate accompanying garnishes of excellent capsicums, spring onions and tomatoes which must have been grown in heated glasshouses. All very fresh and tasty. There was not a great deal of fresh fruit around, but apples were quite common. I was offered the nicest Golden Delicious I have ever eaten and told that these were known as 'Moldovan bananas' (*see photo above*).

Martin Butterfield

Photos by Martin Butterfield



Spray for bugs—“Gather some specimens of the insect (or slug or snail) you wish to be rid of, macerate them (or put them in a blender) with water, dilute the resulting cocktail greatly with water and spray the infected territory.” This may work because of pathogen activation, because the odour attracts predators or parasites or because the insect’s distress pheromones are released when the bugs are liquefied and the spray becomes a repellent. *Source: Brisbane Organic Growers Inc. (BOGI) Newsletter Dec 2003, p10, from Winter: Soil Health*

Worm farms again – Worms eat bacteria that eat the food scraps – the bacteria and fungi are the preferred food of the worms; if you use cooked food there is less bacteria population. Also chopped or pureed is best to increase the bacteria. “Under good conditions, bacteria will double in population every 20 minutes.” *Source: Worm guru David Murphy, Grass Roots Feb/Mar 2004, p.65.*

Kitchen scraps - Apparently it helps to put your bag of kitchen scraps destined for the compost heap into the fridge overnight first. This speeds the decomposition process and also prevents vegetable seeds sprouting in the compost. Citrus peel treated this way can go into the compost. *Source: Brett Robinson, printed in Pete’s Mailbag, Gardening Australia May 2004, p 21.*

Skim Milk booster - *Canberra Organic Tips and Techniques* column has previously mentioned research recommending milk as an anti-fungal spray. Gardener Bob Rankin

attributes his remarkable tomato crop to having added three handfuls of skim milk powder and a bag of compost on top of the raised tomato bed. *Source: “The Skim Milk Powder Secret” by Bob Rankin, Grass Roots Feb/Mar 2004, p22.*

Liquid seaweed vs nematodes – It’s reported that researchers at the University of Natal, South Africa, have found that liquid seaweed solution (1 tablespoon to 2 gallons of water) significantly reduced nematode damage to potted tomato plants. “Oddly, the treatment doesn’t kill nematodes, nor does it repel them. Rather, natural hormones in the seaweed, called cytokinins, help the plants increase their resistance to nematode invasion. Fewer larvae penetrate the roots and those that do are inhibited in their development. As a side benefit, the fertiliser produced bigger roots and stems and better yields.” *Source: BOGI Newsletter, Feb 2004, p9.*

Soil health - Without soil life, no amount of rock dust will increase soil fertility or improve the availability of nutrients to plants. You need to increase the organic content of the soil. You also need to mulch over the top of added vermicompost to enable it to feed the soil life. *Source: “Stoned Microbes Improve Soil Fertility” by Lou Gonano Suncoast Organics, BOGI Newsletter, Feb 2004, p7, 9.*

Cocopeat—or coir fibre pith is a 100% organic renewable resource made from coconut husks. It is an ideal growing media, soil conditioner and mulch for the organic grower. Used widely in high quality potting mixes Cocopeat has an amazing water holding capacity, excellent air filled porosity and good rewetting ability.

The standard grade 5kg block expands to 60L and is used for potting mixes and soil conditioner. The coco-mulch 5 kg block expands to 50L and is used as a long lasting snail repellent mulch. Alone Cocopeat has very little nutrition so mix in compost, some seaweed extract or your other favorite plant foods to ensure healthy growing conditions. Cocopeat is available at Gorman House Markets every Saturday. The 5 kg blocks sell for \$8 each or at \$7 for 3-9 blocks or \$6 for 10+ blocks OR phone Peter on 0438 616762 for orders or enquiries.

Soil conditioners—See p6, *Canberra Organic* advertiser EcoMeats sells Alroc products. JP

Canberra Organic Growers Society 2004 Survey

The management committee is always looking for ways to improve COGS. We seek your feedback on the way our society currently operates and what you might like to see changed in the future. The committee will hold a planning day in the next couple of months in order to determine the future direction of the society. The survey results will be used by the committee to make informed decisions about the future.

One year's membership or a book voucher will be offered to one lucky respondent. If you wish your survey to remain anonymous, that's fine, but you won't go into the prize draw. Completed surveys can be posted to COGS at PO Box 347, Dickson ACT 2602 or handed to the membership secretary at the May or June meeting. The prize draw will take place at the conclusion of the June meeting.

We encourage you to participate.

COGS Committee.

Please complete this form by ticking the boxes below.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT COGS ?

How important are the monthly meetings to you?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important | <input type="checkbox"/> not interested in the meetings at all |
| <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> can't attend the meetings |

How many meetings have you attended in the last 12 months?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 to 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 to 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 or 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> none |

What topics are of interest to you at meetings? (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> growing techniques | <input type="checkbox"/> seed saving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> water conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> genetic modification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> herb cultivation | <input type="checkbox"/> permaculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> organic fertilizers | <input type="checkbox"/> organic pest control |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talks from local organic growers | <input type="checkbox"/> question and answer nights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> worms/compost | <input type="checkbox"/> chooks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not interested in attending meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> other, please specify |

.....
How important are COGS community gardens to you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important | <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not very important | <input type="checkbox"/> couldn't care less |

Do you have a plot in a COGS community garden?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no, but I am thinking of getting one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> no, and I am not interested in a plot | |

How important is COGS Backyard at Xeriscape to you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important | <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not very important | <input type="checkbox"/> what is the COGS Backyard? |

When was the last time you visited the COGS Backyard?

- ☐ I visited at least once within the last 12 months
☐ My last visit was more than 12 months ago
☐ I have never visited

How important is the COGS Library to you?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important | <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not very important | <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't know there was a library |

How many books did you borrow from the library in the last year?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 5 but less than 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> less than 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> none |

Are there any books you would like added to the library? Please specify

How important is the COGS Internet site to you?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important | <input type="checkbox"/> not very important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important | <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't know there was an Internet site for COGS |

How often did you visit the COGS Internet site in the last 12 months?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than 6 times | <input type="checkbox"/> less than 6 times |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not at all | |

Is there anything you would like changed or added to the Internet site? Please specify

How important is the Magazine to you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important | <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not very important | <input type="checkbox"/> couldn't care less |

How many articles do you read in each edition?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> every article | <input type="checkbox"/> most articles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> about half of the articles | <input type="checkbox"/> only a few articles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> none, I throw it straight in the recycling bin | |

Which sections of the magazine do you find interesting?

Do you have any suggestions for topics you would like to see in future editions?

Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the magazine?

How important is COGS Seed Saving to you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important | <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not very important | <input type="checkbox"/> couldn't care less |

How many packets of seeds have you purchased from COGS in the last year?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> more than 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> less than 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> none | |

Did you purchase the seeds because they were (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> locally grown | <input type="checkbox"/> organic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> value for money | <input type="checkbox"/> unusual varieties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> from COGS | <input type="checkbox"/> other |

How important is the COGS bookstall to you?

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important, I often buy books from COGS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat important, I occasionally buy books from COGS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not very important, I rarely buy books from COGS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> couldn't care less, I buy books elsewhere |

How important are the plant stalls at monthly meetings to you?

- | |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very important, I regularly buy plants at meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not very important, I rarely buy plants at meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> couldn't care less, I never buy plants at meetings |

Are you interested in visits to local organic farms organised by COGS?

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes, overnight visits okay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes, but prefer day visits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> no visits at all |

Are you interested in attending workshops or seminars organised by COGS?

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes, my preferred times are: (tick all that apply) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> weekdays | <input type="checkbox"/> weekends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> weeknights | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> no, not interested in workshops or seminars | |

If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, what workshop or seminar topics would interest you?

Please specify

Do you receive Organic email from COGS?

- ☐ yes ☐ no, I'm not interested
☐ no, I didn't know there was any, how I can get it?

If you receive Organic email do you find it: (tick all that apply)

- ☐ very interesting ☐ not very interesting
☐ never read it ☐ there's not enough
☐ there's too much

What subjects would you be interested in receiving emails about?

Would you like to see a COGS stall at public events (Green Living Fair, Floriade, Gorman House markets, CIT plant sale etc)?

- ☐ yes ☐ no

Would you volunteer to assist with the COGS stall?

- ☐ yes ☐ no, I don't have time

Do you have any other suggestions to improve COGS? Please specify.....
.....
.....
.....

ABOUT YOU

Where did you first find out about COGS?

- ☐ market stall ☐ Internet site
☐ friend/word of mouth ☐ COGS Backyard at Xeriscape
☐ purchased magazine from retail outlet ☐ other, please specify
.....

How long have you been a member?

- ☐ less than 12 months ☐ 1 to 5 years
☐ more than 5 years

Do you think the membership fees are :

- ☐ too expensive ☐ about right
☐ too cheap

Contact Details (optional)

Name Phone

Are you willing to be contacted by COGS committee to provide more information regarding your responses?

- ☐ yes ☐ no

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey. Please send your completed form to COGS at PO Box 347, Dickson ACT 2602 or bring it to the May or June meeting at the Griffin Centre.



EU Urged to Reject GM Rice

Leading environmental groups are urging the EU to reject a new strain of genetically modified rice. Member states have [had] until Sunday [March 28] to object to an application by the German-based Bayer CropScience to import the strain LL Rice62 into the European Union. Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace have expressed concern about health and environmental effects the GM rice could have. The environment groups say the EU's 15 member states must reject the GM rice to prevent the world's most important staple food falling into the hands of multinational companies. Rice is a staple diet for an estimated 2.5 billion people. EU approval would send a dangerous signal to developing countries and could lead to the eventual corporate takeover of one of the world's most important foods, the two organizations said in a joint statement Tuesday.

Source: By Stefania Bianchi, Inter Press Service, Brussels, 23 March 2004

Victory against Bayer GE Corn in the UK

Following the recent controversial approval of Bayer's GE corn for commercial release in Britain, the chemical giant has given up growing its GE crop. This is a great victory for the British public and spells the end of GE crops in the UK for the foreseeable future. Some of the world's most powerful companies and one of the world's most powerful governments have been determined to get GE crops grown commercially in the UK. Yet thousands and thousands of Britons actively opposed GE crops and gained the removal of GE from all human foods and nearly all poultry and pig feed; reduced the number of GE field trials from over 300 locations per year to currently zero, and caused Monsanto to leave the UK!

*Source: Greenpeace True Food Network:
<http://www.truefood.org.au/news2.html?mode=intl&newsid=143>*

GeneEthics Comment on ABARE report

[A report of] The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE) [is] claiming Australia/ NZ would be \$2.5 billion per year worse off by not adopting GE crops ... the report says world gross

domestic product would increase \$304.6 billion by 2015 with GE crops. GeneEthics Director, Bob Phelps [says] "GE crops are less than 4% of global broad acre agriculture and are struggling to survive against almost universal rejection on every continent except North America ... ABARE's assertion that 'consumer acceptance increases with the level of education and awareness of the technology and its potential impacts' is refuted by all major opinion surveys ... Food buyers world-wide overwhelmingly reject GE foods and wherever they are adequately labeled people leave gene manipulated foods on supermarket shelves," he says. "ABARE's modelers assume GE crops have the potential to yield more, adapt to climate change, use less chemicals and be more nutritious, but none of this exists" ... "The only commercial GE crops now available resist herbicides or produce insect toxins, and this means more chemical use, environmental and food pollution, and higher input costs," says Mr Phelps. "Monopoly fees on patented seed would also increase costs for farmers, and more expensive food and fiber, yet ABARE counts this as a benefit in the rarified realm of market modeling," ... "The report ignores environmental and public health impacts, yet minimal contamination of the US human food supply by Starlink corn cost over \$1 billion," he says.

Source: Media Release, Bob Phelps, Geneethics, October 2003.

Bird Flu Fear on GM Chook Virus

A Plan to infect 5000 chickens with a genetically modified virus has sounded alarm bells among scientists who fear the designer microbe could become a deadly new disease like bird flu. Critics say the risk is so high that the trial should be banned. "We're so worried about new and emerging diseases like SARS and the West Nile virus in the US, we have to be absolutely vigilant," Australian National University viral immunologist Arno Mullbacher said. He and others argue that the biotech firm behind the project, CSIRO spinoff Imugene Limited, has failed to provide evidence that the virus won't mutate or spread with unpredictable results. Imugene's goal is a vaccine to boost the immune systems of commercial chooks, now treated with antibiotics to enhance growth. Scientists warn that overuse of antibiotics in



animals is breeding drug-resistant bugs that infect people. Imugene scientists have inserted chicken immune cells into the fowl adenovirus (FAV).

Imugene chief scientific officer Mike Sheppard said laboratory tests and previous field trials—conducted under high security by the CSIRO—suggested that the rebuilt FAV boosted chicken growth by 8 per cent and would not infect other animals ... “in (laboratory) testing we’ve not been able to grow the (FAV) virus ... in anything but chicken cells,” he said.

ANU viral immunologist Ian Ramshaw agrees Imugene’s virus probably is safe. “One never says never in these situations, but my view is that there would be a minimum chance of (mutations) occurring, based on the evidence we have at this stage,” Professor Ramshaw said.

Tony Peacock, head of the Co-operative Research Centre for Pest Animal Control, agreed and added: “I’m greatly encouraged that an Australian company is taking an Australian development further.” But ANU visiting virologist Adrian Gibbs disagreed: “In my mind it’s a recipe for disaster.” Professor Gibbs has reviewed details of Imugene’s proposal to the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and says it contains “major scientific flaws”.

If Imugene gets the green light, field trials would begin soon at three CSIRO sites in Victoria. But approval hit a snag this week. When *The Weekend Australian* contacted the OGTR, a spokeswoman said regulator Sue Meek had just decided to “stop the clock” on the application, posted last December on the OGTR’s website, and would require more details from Imugene. *Source: By Leigh Dayton, Science Writer The Weekend Australian, April 10, 2004, www.theaustralian.news.com.au*

Canadian Farmers Union spokesperson Warns Farmers to Avoid GM Crops

Colleen Ross, the National Farmers Union of Canada spokesperson on genetically modified crops, is touring Australia with the support of environmental and anti-GE farmers groups. Ross, who farmed in Australia for many years before moving to Canada, has a word of warning for Australian farmers and governments considering the use of genetically engineered crops. “I don’t want Australian farmers to go

through what we have gone through six or seven years down the track. We have Monsanto taking our farmers to court, we have complicated intellectual property rights and trade disputes. Far better just to say no,” she said. “Farmers who are growing GE in Canada and the United States say ‘it’s our right to grow GE crops’ but when they grow GE crops, us non-GE farmers lose our right to grow our non-GE crops because of the contamination,” she pointed out.

Ross dismisses the claims by supporters of GE that co-existence is possible. In January she was in court supporting a Canadian farmer Percy Schmeiser, who is being sued by Monsanto over his contaminated crop that the company claims was in fact the unauthorized use of its technology. Ross has a blunt message for Australian farmers and governments: “Why is Australia even considering it? My message to Australia is ‘what the heck are you thinking?’ ” *Source: article at http://www.non-gm-farmers.com/news_details.asp?ID=1188, 5 April 2004*

GM Food Crops Get Taken off the Menu

Plans to grow genetically modified food crops in Australia are on hold indefinitely, after the NSW Government ruled out a 3000-hectare trial of GM canola. The shock decision came a week after Western Australia imposed an outright ban on GM food crops, and Victoria extended its moratorium for another four years. NSW Agriculture Minister Ian McDonald vetoed the 3000ha commercial trial, despite his own GM advisory committee recommending it go ahead. Mr Macdonald said there would be no coexistence trial of crops for at least another year, but he would allow three small scientific trials covering a total of 42ha. ... The NSW decision blocks possible commercialization of GM in the short term, as Tasmania and South Australia also have moratoriums, and the climate in Queensland and the Northern Territory is too warm to grow canola crops.

Source: By Caitlin Fitzsimmons and Megan Saunders, April 2, 2004, www.theaustralian.news.com.au

GE News is compiled by Bridget Farrer

From the Library



COGS Library Coding System—As many readers may have noticed, our library books have a letter code as well as a number. More often than not the title of a book will indicate its subject matter, however, in some cases this is not so obvious. For example, the book titled *Quantum Carrot* (Id no 218 GO L) deals with gardening organically (GO) and the benefit on one's lifestyle (L). For those members who would like to read about specific subjects, a current subject list is available as well as a code list.

The Herb Garden Month-by-Month

No 149 G H

Barbara Segall

Although written for the English gardening year, the information contained is useful for this region as we also have distinct seasons. Instead of January being the first month of the gardening calendar in the northern hemisphere, use July for the southern hemisphere. Each monthly segment gives the plants for the month, practical projects and tasks.

New Additions to the Library

Beby Bros

The Natural Pharmacy in your Garden

No 144 P He

Amber Jessica Mackenzie

A small book full of practical information on how to establish a culinary and medicinal garden, establish and maintain a worm farm and how to grow and use herbs, vegetables and grasses. In all about 30 different plants are described.

Organic Control of Common Weeds

No 145 P We

Jackie French

A previous edition of this book was held in the library before but unfortunately was not returned after borrowing. This is a new edition and covers such topics as Weed Management, Natural Weed Control and Using Weeds.

The ANZ Gardener's Survival Manual

No 148 G

Ann Bonar

A general gardening book dealing with design, site, basic care and health and hygiene - emphasis on how to solve problems in the garden. Although not strictly an organic gardening book, it does contain non-chemical remedies.

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5 kilo Organic Tea Bag:

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yields 500Lt of liquid
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Annual General Meeting Reports

COMMITTEE'S REPORT

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING GRIFFIN CENTRE TUESDAY 23rd MARCH 2004

Presented by the President Keith Colls

It has been another active year for COGS and the Committee. From a COGS perspective, perhaps the most significant aspect of the year was the introduction of level two followed by level three water restrictions. This had a significant impact on all COGS' gardeners, but to their credit all the gardens survived remarkably well and continued to be productive.

Gardens:

COGS operated eleven community gardens (not including Xeriscape) throughout the year. Generally, the gardens are operating well. There are still vacancies in some of the gardens and the Committee is in the process of revitalising the Oaks Estate garden which has had a significant fall off in membership.

Vandalism was not a significant problem this year although part of the fence at Erindale was destroyed. Fortunately (for COGS), the fence was owned by the ACT government and replaced at no cost to COGS.

The quarterly meeting of garden conveners as the Garden Conveners sub-committee operated very successfully during the year greatly improving communication between the garden conveners and the COGS Committee and facilitating the smooth running of the gardens.

Xeriscape:

Jane Andrews took over the maintenance of

COGS Backyard at the ActewAGL Xeriscape garden and, with the occasional assistance of working bees, has continued to provide a creditable promotion of organic growing methods to the many people who visit the Xeriscape garden throughout the year. COGS was also promoted through our stall at the open days and plant sales organised by the Xeriscape Council. Jane was also the COGS representative on the Xeriscape Council.

Library:

The library has been operated this year by Beatrix Bros with the assistance of Caroline Nimmo. Several books were purchased to broaden the subject matter available to members. There are over 300 books in the library.

Web Site:

Maren Child has continued to maintain the web site throughout the year. Several of the COGS pamphlets and the planting guides are available in downloadable formats and new material published in *Canberra Organic*, particularly articles related to the gardens, is constantly being added to the web site.

Membership:

Currently, as at 8/3/04, COGS has a total of 335 (319*) members made up of:

- 290 (275) ordinary members;
- 10 (10) life members;
- 30 (34) institutions.

Of the ordinary members there are 231 (219) full and 64 (56) concessions.

Currently 142 (165) members have garden plots.

*Numbers in brackets refer to membership at March 2003.

Seed Bank/Seedlings:

Beatrix Bros has continued to maintain the seed bank data base and, together with Adrienne Fazekas, has undertaken a review of COGS seed holdings. Some gardens now have plots dedicated to the production of seeds.

This year Leslie Pattinson, Jane Andrews and Jen Johnson produced a large number of seedlings for sale at the Xeriscape plant sale. Orana School also kindly donated plants to COGS for the Xeriscape plant sale as did a number of COGS members. It was pleasing to see an increasing number of seeds and seedlings being brought in by members for sale and exchange at our monthly meetings.

I would like to thank everyone involved in producing COGS seeds and seedlings.

Organic Gardening for Beginners:

Keith Colls continued to run courses on organic gardening for beginners in conjunction with CIT Solutions. These courses were very successful with every course filled to capacity. Several participants joined COGS and some have taken up plots in COGS gardens.

Outings and Stalls:

COGS continued to participate in outings and stalls during the year including Xeriscape Open days and plant sales although some of those COGS usually attend (eg the Green Living Fair) were cancelled by the organisers because of insurance problems. These activities provided the organisation with good publicity, and seeds and many seedlings were sold.

Monthly Speakers:

We had many interesting speakers at the monthly meetings as well as useful interactions amongst members during the harvest nights and panel discussions.

Canberra Organic:

Janet Popovic took over the role of editor of *Canberra Organic* from Stephen Dean during the year. Janet has produced a high quality and informative magazine which has been a significant means of communication with COGS members as well as other similar organisations.

Thank-you:

As President I would like to thank all Committee members and volunteers who put in such a great effort during the year and made COGS the successful organisation it is. The year started with a full Committee of thirteen members but numbers have dwindled to nine at present.

I would also like to thank all members of COGS for their support of the Committee during the year.

Finally I would like to thank all those regular helpers, the garden conveners, the stall helpers, Marie Bahr and Mary Flowers for the delicious cakes and tea they serve at our monthly meetings, Murray Dadds for the book sales stand and Elizabeth Palmer for fielding all the COGS phone enquiries.



Keith Colls

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2003

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

	Note	2003	2002
		\$	\$
INCOME			
Annual subscriptions		4383.00	5232.00
Bank interest		10.34	8.97
Course tuition		1063.82	1060.00
Donations		21.00	30.50
Garden income (plot fees)		6931.53	6792.54
Internet advertising		25.00	-
Joining fees		293.00	422.00
Meeting suppers		156.75	111.30
Quarterly advertising		463.00	30.00
Quarterly sales		421.00	154.00
Seed exchange		471.95	671.35
Stalls		740.60	937.20
Total income		14980.99	15449.86
EXPENDITURE			
Account charges		103.90	106.60
Administration		134.35	1197.50
Affiliated organisations		135.50	130.50
Course		102.30	29.95
Depreciation	(6)	2232.35	3511.00
Equipment written off	(7)	625.00	429.00
Flyer production		-	120.00
Gardens – General outlays		1857.04	2601.68
Gardens – Tools & equipment	(2d)	291.22	1766.40
Gardens – Water bills		1016.00	807.00
Insurance		4438.50	4900.50
Internet		169.00	88.00
Library		70.95	338.70
Meeting refreshments		-	31.65
Postage		852.59	1014.80
Quarterly production		2454.71	1748.94
Rental and storage		413.21	530.82
Seeds and seedlings		184.50	792.09
Speakers		-	65.00
Stalls		71.40	30.00
Stationery		43.85	80.56
Telephone		140.00	81.00
Xeriscape		400.30	180.88
Total expenditure		15761.38	20582.57
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR PERIOD		(780.39)	(5132.71)

The Statement of Income and Expenditure should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes to and forming part of the accounts.

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2003

	Note	2003 \$	2002 \$
MEMBERS FUNDS			
Opening balance		45482	50615
Surplus (deficit) for year		<u>(780)</u>	<u>(5133)</u>
Closing balance		44702	45482
Represented by:-			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	(9)	120	543
Cash at bank		12019	11230
Debtors		<u>532</u>	<u>-</u>
		12671	11773
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and Equipment	(8)	<u>32031</u>	<u>33709</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		44702	45482
CURRENT LIABILITIES	(2c)	0	0
NET ASSETS		<u>44170</u>	<u>45482</u>

The Statement of Assets and Liabilities should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes to and forming part of the accounts.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2003

	Note	2003 \$	2002 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
INFLOWS			
Annual subscriptions		4676	5232
Garden income(mainly plot levies)		6931	6793
Magazine sales and advertising		884	184
Seed and seedling sales		1212	1609
Course		532	1060
Inflows from other activities		214	572
OUTFLOWS			
Garden expenses		(2873)	(3590)
Magazine and flyer production		(2455)	(1869)
Postage		(853)	(1015)
Insurance		(4439)	(4901)
Seeds and seedlings		(185)	(792)
Outflows to other sources		<u>(1808)</u>	<u>(2710)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		1836	573
CASH FLOWS FROM NON-OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
INFLOWS		0	0
OUTFLOWS			
Payments for purchases of plant & equipment		(1179)	(2764)
Payments for purchases of tools & equipment		<u>(291)</u>	<u>(1766)</u>
Net cash provided by non-operating activities		(1470)	(4530)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		366	(3957)
Cash at beginning of year		<u>11773</u>	<u>15730</u>
Cash at end of year	(9)	12139	<u>11773</u>

The Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes to and forming part of the accounts.

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2003cont'd

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2003

NOTE 1: FUNCTIONS OF THE CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY

The Society exists to promote organic growing in the Canberra region.

NOTE 2: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The significant accounting policies adopted by the Society are stated to assist in a general understanding of the financial statements.

a) Statutory requirements

The Society is required pursuant to Section 72 of the Associations Incorporations Act 1991 to prepare accounts which give a true and fair account of income and expenditure and assets and liabilities of the Society for the most recently ended financial year.

b) Accounting method

As far as practical, the accounts have been prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. The Statements are prepared on historical cost principles.

c) Liabilities

Subscriptions and plot fees paid in advance are not recognised as a liability.

d) Tools and equipment

Purchases of garden equipment valued at less than one hundred dollars (\$100) per item are expensed in the year of purchase.

NOTE 3: COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

As at 31 December 2003 there were no material commitments or contingencies

NOTE 4: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year there have been no related party transactions.

NOTE 5: AFTER BALANCE DAY EVENTS

Since the balance date, 31 December 2003, there have been no events that are of a material value or likely to have a material impact upon the accounts.

NOTE 6: DEPRECIATION

Plant and equipment is depreciated at the rates shown below.

	2003	2002
	\$	\$
P&E at 31 December 2001	53181	50417
P&E lost 2002	(625)	(429)
	<u>52556</u>	<u>49988</u>
Accumulated depreciation at 31 December 2002	19043	15532
Depreciation 2003		
Fences (5%)	851	896
Plumbing (5%)	468	493
Mowers (15%)	659	536
Sheds (10%)	90	101
Other garden fixtures (10%)	<u>164</u>	<u>1485</u>
	<u>3511</u>	<u>2542</u>
Accumulated depreciation at 31 December 2003	21275	19043

NOTE 7: The P&E lost during 2003 was the lawnmower and signage from Xeriscape as a result of the bushfires on January 18th.

NOTE 8: PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Cost 2003	Accumulated depreciation	Written down value 2003	Written down value 2002
	\$	\$	\$	\$
P&E at 31 December 2002	52752	19043		
P&E lost 2003	(625)			
P&E purchased 2003				
Fences		851	16165	17016
Plumbing		468	8896	9364
Mowers/Trailer	600	659	4332	4753
Sheds		90	815	905
Other garden equipment	<u>579</u>	<u>164</u>	<u>1823</u>	<u>1671</u>
	53306	21275	33709	34885

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DEC 2003 contd

NOTE 9: STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS

Cash balances comprise:

	2003	2002
	\$	\$
Cash at bank:-		
Main account (see Note 10)	12019	10312
Northside account	-	918
	<u>12019</u>	<u>11230</u>
Cash on hand:-		
Cash&cheques not yet banked	-	175
Charnwood garden	-	303
Cotter garden	43	43
Oaks Estate garden	2	21
Petty cash	<u>75</u>	<u>1</u>
	120	543
Total cash	12139	11773

NOTE 10: FUNDS

Monies held in the COGS main bank account are notionally allocated to one of five funds to be used for different purposes.

Fund	Balance 1 Jan 2003	Income	Expenses	Inter fund transfers	Balance 31 Dec 2003
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
General funds	2096	7517	8658	1482	2437
Water fund	3504	2613	1016	-1920	3181
Emerg.& Cont fund	1021	43	488	-	576
Asset fund	-	-	676	1920	1244
Garden sub-accounts (see Note 11)	<u>3691</u>	6932	1904	-4138	<u>4581</u>
Main account total	10312				12019

NOTE 11: SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BY GARDEN SUB-ACCOUNT

Garden	Opening balance 1 Jan 2002	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31 Dec 2002
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Charnwood	303.05	378.00	698.20	(17.15)
Cook	539.94	1220.50	1337.12	423.32
Cotter	273.78	643.00	455.20	461.58
Dickson	0.00	40.15	24.09	16.06
Erindale	29.86	207.50	175.76	61.60
Holder	820.72	1562.00	1261.80	1120.92
Kambah	405.60	609.80	437.15	578.25
Northside	1020.80	546.58	733.80	833.58
Oaks Estate	241.65	55.00	46.75	249.90
Queanbeyan	24.39	246.50	260.02	10.87
Theodore	31.31	1422.50	611.55	842.26
Total garden funds	3691.10	6931.53	6041.44	4581.19

These funds represent monies raised by gardens and kept in garden sub-accounts. Some small expenditures on behalf of gardens through the COGS petty cash account will not be reflected in these figures.

Garden expenditure figures include amounts transferred from garden sub-accounts to the water fund and to general funds for insurance.

CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INCORPORATED STATEMENT BY THE COMMITTEE

In the opinion of the Committee, the accompanying Statement of Income and Expenditure, Statement of Assets and Liabilities, Statement of Cash Flows and Notes to and forming part of the Accounts:

- present fairly the financial position of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc. at 31 December 2003, and the financial results of the Society for the year ending on that date.
- the names of the executive members of the Committee during the year ended 31 December 2003 were
 - Keith Colls President
 - Alan Robertson Vice-President
 - Adrienne Fazekas Treasurer
 - Victor Oates Membership secretary
- the main activities of the Society during the year were to facilitate and promote organic growing in the ACT and operate several community gardens.
- the net deficit of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2003 amounted to \$780.

This statement is signed on behalf of the Committee by:



President

Date: 10/3/2004



Treasurer

Date: 10/3/04

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CANBERRA ORGANIC GROWERS SOCIETY INC.

I have audited the attached financial statements of Canberra Organic Growers Society for the year ended 31 December 2003. The audit was carried out pursuant to Section 74 of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*. The financial statements include:

Statement of Income and Expenditure
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
Statement of Cash Flows
Notes To and Forming Part of the Accounts

Scope of the Audit

The audit was conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards so as to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the accounts are free of material misstatement. Procedures included examination on a test basis of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements and evaluation of the accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. The audit opinion relating to income is confined to amounts recorded in the primary accounting records. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and statutory requirements.

Audit Opinion

Subject to the above, in my opinion:

The accompanying Statement of Income and Expenditure, Statement of Assets and Liabilities, Statement of Cash Flows and Notes To and Forming Part of the Accounts have been properly drawn up in accordance with Section 72(2) of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991* so as to:

give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure of the Society for the year ending 31 December 2003; and

the assets and liabilities of the Society as at 31 December 2003.

The Society has no mortgages, charges or other securities of any description affecting any property of the Society at the end of the financial year.



P.E. Marstin CPA

Hon. Auditor

Canberra, ACT

13 March, 2004



WINTER VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE

Asparagus

Prepare the bed before you buy the crowns to plant in late Winter - early Spring. Since this is a perennial crop which can last for up to 20 years it is well worth the effort of establishing properly. Asparagus needs good drainage and plentiful food and can be planted very successfully in a raised bed enriched with compost and well rotted manure. Seaweed is an excellent mulch. The crowns are planted in a trench, but with the roots straddling a ridge. Cover so dormant shoots are about 4cm below the surface. Do not harvest spears the first year, and only harvest for a few weeks the second year. Remember this is a long-term investment.

Broad Beans

Late plantings of broad beans in June may be very slow to germinate. Better results are usually achieved with an Autumn or early Spring planting.

Kohlrabi

Prepare the soil well with lots of organic matter. Needs rapid growth for flavour.

Lettuce

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

Onions

Mid season varieties are often sown late Autumn or 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.

Peas

Peas can be planted in August/September for an early summer crop but may be very slow to germinate if the ground is still very cold or wet.



Rhubarb

This is a perennial but plants generally only produce well for a few years, then fresh plants need to be started from subdivided crowns planted in late winter or early spring. It is very hardy, but it is a gross feeder and will appreciate lots of compost or well rotted manure and plenty of water.

Other possibilities

Growers may wish to start a number of crops in late winter rather than early Spring if the winter is mild or if they have a sheltered garden bed. Such crops include Artichokes (Globe and Jerusalem), Beetroot, Cabbage, Carrots, Potatoes and Radish.

Frost-sensitive vegetables such as Capsicum, Eggplant and Tomatoes can be started early in August indoors

but may need a heated glasshouse or warm spot to germinate and will certainly need protection before being planted out in spring.



Winter is the usual time to plant and prune the soft fruits including:

Strawberries:

Plant certified stock or propagate from runners (not from plants more than 2 years old however) in a soil enriched with compost or well rotted manure. Remove old leaves and excess runners to tidy up the plants in winter.

Berries:

Raspberries, youngberries, boysenberries etc can be planted during winter while they are dormant. Remember these bear fruit on canes grown in the previous year so to prune remove all the old canes in autumn or winter making sure to leave the current seasons growth for next years fruit. Autumn fruiting raspberries bear on the current years growth so are cut to the ground in winter after they have fruited.

Currants:

Red, white or black currants are easy bushes to grow in Canberra as they withstand very cold weather and don't mind heavy clay soil. Currants produce a fruit rarely available commercially. They need to be pruned in winter to remove dead wood and around a third of the oldest branches to encourage new growth and allow for good air circulation.

Gooseberries:

Like similar conditions to currants.

Winter Vegetable Planting Guide

	JUN	JUL	AUG
Artichokes		T	T
Asparagus		T	ST
Broad Beans		S	S
Kohlrabi			S
Lettuce			S
Onions	ST	ST	T
Peas			S
Rhubarb		T	T
Silverbeet			S
Snowpeas	T	T	ST
Spinach			S

S = Seed Sowing T = Transplanting

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

Canberra Organic Quick Quiz

1. Name 3 vegetables that grow well in Canberra during winter.
2. When is the best time to divide or plant rhubarb crowns?
3. How many vegetables can you name that are able to be harvested during Winter in Canberra?
4. When is the best time to plant asparagus
 - a) crowns;
 - b) seed or seedlings?

Answers are on page 35. Too easy? Send your own quiz and answers for possible publication to editor@cogs.asn.au

COGS Committee Members & Helpers

President	Martin Butterfield	6253 1286	president@cogs.asn.au
Vice President	Vacant		
Secretary	Christine Anttila	6291 8057	info@cogs.asn.au
Public Officer	Christine Anttila	6291 8057	info@cogs.asn.au
Treasurer	Adrienne Fazekas	6247 5882	afazekas@yahoo.com.au
Membership Secretary	Victor Oates	6241 5193	members@cogs.asn.au
Librarian	Beby Bros	6248 0063	bhabros@apex.net.au
Seed Librarian	Vacant		
Editor	Janet Popovic	6258 2811	editor@cogs.asn.au
General Committee Members	Ben Bradey, Lucas Dryden, Conrad van Hest, Robin McKeown.		
<u>Garden Convenors</u>			
Charnwood	John Turnbull	6254 3070	karmn@bigpond.com
Cook	Alan Robertson	6251 0906	araba@netspeed.com.au
Cotter	Andy Hrast	6288 7262	andy.hrast@dotars.gov.au
Dickson	Beby Bros	6248 0063	bhabros@apex.net.au
Erindale	Christine Carter	6231 5862	ccarter@netspeed.com.au
Holder	Stephen Dean	6161 8803	sgd@webone.com.au
Kambah	Shirley Irvin	6231 6104	shirley.irvin@optusnet.com.au
Northside	Ben Bradey	6244 5098	ben.bradey@centrelink.gov.au
Oaks Estate	Martin Butterfield	6253 1286	president@cogs.asn.au
Queanbeyan	Katrina Willis	6232 9743	katrina.willis@aph.gov.au
Theodore	Richard Reed	6291 1897	rmjreed@ozemail.com.au
<u>Monthly Meetings</u>			
Book sales	Murray Dadds		
Supper convenors	Marie Bahr, Mary Flowers		
Librarians	Beby Bros, assisted by Ben Bradey		
Web manager	Maren Child		mchild@starbytes.com.au
Telephone contact	Elizabeth Palmer	6248 8004	
Inquiries about Organic Growing		6248 8004	info@cogs.asn.au

To contact COGS

Email info@cogs.asn.au or visit our website at www.cogs.asn.au

COGS monthly meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month (except December and January)
at 7:30pm in Room 4 of the Griffin Centre in Civic
Visitors Welcome



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 the adoption of organic growing methods. COGS is an association without specific political or religious affiliation as a group. COGS has the following objectives – to:

- Foster the use of organic methods in home gardening, horticulture and agriculture
- Foster organic agricultural knowledge
- Promote the production and consumption of certified organically grown foods and the adoption of recognised organic standards
- Demonstrate and encourage the use of organic growing techniques
- Provide a forum for the discussion of matters of interest to organic growers in the ACT and surrounding region
- Facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between members and with other organic growers
- Assist members in establishing their own organic growing areas
- Administer community gardens operated under organic agricultural principles for recreational, educational or rehabilitation purposes and for the self-supply of contaminant free produce.

ADMINISTRATION

COGS is run by a voluntary committee which is elected annually at the AGM in March. The committee meets monthly and all members are encouraged to consider participating in the work of the committee.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings of members are held in Room 4 at the Griffin Centre, Civic, at 7.30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of the month (except in December and January). Each month there is a guest speaker. Recent meeting topics have included Backyard poultry keeping, Worms, Herbs and Seed Saving. At the meetings there is a produce and seed exchange table and a bookstall. COGS seeds and seedlings are also available for purchase. Members may also borrow two items from the COGS library. A light supper is available after the meeting.

Visitors are welcome.

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Canberra Organic, the quarterly publication of COGS, contains articles on organic growing, informs members of upcoming speakers and events, and includes planting and growing information specifically for the Canberra region. Members are encouraged to contribute articles.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

COGS currently operates 11 community gardens in the Canberra region. Gardens are located at Charnwood, Cook, Curtin (Cotter Garden), Dickson, 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. Plot holders are required to pay an annual levy to cover the cost of water, insurance, tools and maintenance. The ACT Government has supported the establishment of these gardens through the ACT Office of Sport and Recreation and the Department of Urban Services Community Renewal program.

INTERNET

COGS maintains a web site devoted to organic growing at www.cogs.asn.au. The site contains the COGS information papers on organic growing, seasonal planting guides, certification information, a page for children and links to related organisations and information sources.

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.

CONTACT

COGS

PO Box 347

DICKSON ACT 2602

Phone: (02) 6248 8004

Email: info@cogs.asn.au

Web: www.cogs.asn.au

COGS NOTICE BOARD

Speakers

Room 4, Griffin Centre, Civic, 7:30 pm

25 May

Lynette West
Biodynamics

22 June

Catriona Maurice of Yalleroo Farm

27 July

Lisa Stuart, local herbalist
Herbal Health and Skincare

24 August

Kim Pullen, CSIRO entomologist
Garden Pests—to be confirmed

28 September

Ian Fraser, naturalist
Indigeneous Food Plants—to be confirmed

Please check the COGS website at
www.cogs.asn.au for updates and confirmations.

Garden Regeneration Project:

(Canberra Urban Parks and Places)

Co-ordinator: Nina Stahl, Ph: (02) 6207 0142
email: nina.stahl@act.gov.au

Phoenix Garden Group Contacts:

Chris Stamford ph 62884049

Lesley Pattinson ph 6288 0293

Volunteer Gardeners Wanted

COGS frequently receives requests from worthy community projects for volunteer gardeners with some spare time to help. If you can help—you'll be helping promote the good name of COGS also just by being a volunteer—please contact a COGS Committee Member listed on page 32.

Events

Saturdays

Gorman House Markets

Saturday mornings, 8am-11am

Farmers Market, EPIC
(enter near Shell service station)

5 June

World Environment Day—theme:
Wanted! Seas and Oceans—Dead or Alive?

23-24 October

Seed Savers' Conference, Exeter—see
www.seedsavers.net

COGS Survey 2004

Please don't forget to fill out,
pull out, and return, the
Survey form at the centre
of this issue.

We look forward to your
responses.

Completed forms can be sent to
COGS at PO Box 347,
Dickson ACT 2602
or dropped off at the
May or June meetings at
the Griffin Centre.

Canberra Organic Quick Quiz Answers

- 1) Broad beans, spinach, spring onions, mignonette lettuce (and other winter lettuce varieties), garlic
- 2) During Winter
- 3) Broccoli, silverbeet, spinach, bulb fennel, carrots, parsnips, lettuce, asian greens, snow peas, leeks, rocket
- 4a) Winter 4b) Spring or early Summer