



Canberra . Organic

Winter 2008 : Vol 16 No 2



Hearty soups
Pruning pomes
Year of the Potato
Broad beans, hardy herbs



The **Canberra Organic Growers Society** is a non-profit organisation providing a forum for organic growers to exchange information and supports the adoption of organic growing methods in the community.

COGS encourages the use of natural methods to improve our soils, promote sustainability and produce fresh, nutritious food.

For information about COGS and organic gardening, visit the COGS website www.cogs.asn.au

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

COGS meetings are held at 7:30pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month (except December and January) at the Majura Community Centre, Rosevear Place, Dickson.

Guest speakers, a produce and seed exchange and sales and the COGS library feature at each meeting. Visitors welcome.

MEMBERSHIP

COGS offers single, family, associate and overseas memberships for \$25 for one year (\$15 for concessions) or \$40 for two years (\$24 for concessions) for new members.

There is a membership application form in this magazine. Please contact the Membership Secretary or a COGS garden convenor for an information kit.

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COGS is run by a voluntary committee elected at the COGS AGM each March.

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President's report Winter 2008

Following the AGM the new committee is up and running. I would particularly like to thank our previous president, Adrienne Fazekas, for her steady hand steering the

committee during the last three years. The new committee has inherited a well-run, healthy organisation and I hope we will be able to build on this during the coming year.

Rain, restrictions and rates

We have been quite fortunate with reasonable rainfall during these summer months. Consequently, many gardeners have enjoyed good crops this year. Autumn has been somewhat drier but hopefully it will rain soon.

Plot holders are reminded that level 3 restrictions are still in force and must be complied with in all COGS community gardens. To assist gardeners, particularly new plot holders, to maximise the efficiency of their water use in the garden we intend to have at least one of our regular monthly COGS meetings dedicated to methods of waterwise gardening applicable to vegetable and fruit growing.

Water will continue to be an issue this year even if rainfall returns to normal. It has been announced that water rates will be increasing alarmingly on 1 June to cover the cost of new infrastructure to increase the security of the ACT's water supply. This will almost certainly make it necessary to increase plot levies in our community gardens from the beginning of the next gardening year (starting September 2008). In consultation with all the garden convenors, the Committee will determine the new levy at their August meeting.

Problems at some gardens

Unfortunately theft and vandalism have been problems in some of the gardens during the last few months. The police have been notified and various measures have been introduced to make those gardens suffering these problems less attractive to vandals.

All gardeners are urged to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity near gardens. It is recommended that tools and equipment of any value should not be left in gardens unattended. Hopefully this problem will subside as the colder weather approaches.

Initiatives for 2008

On a happier note, there are a couple of initiatives we are intending to introduce this year. We expect to upgrade our web site later in the year to provide more information for members as well as more up to date general information on COGS and organic growing for the public.

We also intend to introduce some special interest groups to improve our knowledge of the range of fruit and vegetables suitable for the Canberra climate. This will cater for both COGS plot holders and those who garden at home. This initiative is described in more detail elsewhere in this magazine.

COGS plant clinic

Gardeners are reminded of the plant clinic we started last year. Its purpose is to identify pest, disease or any other problems your plants may be experiencing and suggest solutions. None of us claim to be experts but together the COGS community has a lot of gardening experience which could be used to assist less experienced gardeners who may be having problems.

So if you have had any pest, disease or other problem with your plants please bring them along to the monthly meetings. Even if you know exactly what the problem is and how to fix it, your experience will be useful for less experienced gardeners. We will set aside up to thirty minutes at each monthly meeting (7:45 to 8:15) before the monthly speaker for the plant clinic or any other garden related matters.

If you have any suggestions of activities you think COGS should undertake to provide more assistance to gardeners, or any improvements we could make to our current activities we would love to hear from you. Either talk to me or any other committee member at one of the monthly meetings or email me with your suggestions.

Keith

Keith Colls

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Canberra Organic is the quarterly publication of the Canberra Organic Growers Society Inc.

It celebrates organic gardening, local produce, information and social exchange and sustainability in the Canberra region.

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EDITOR

Monica van Wensveen

CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome submissions, ideas and feedback.

Contributions preferred in Word, Publisher or text format, on disk, as attached files or as clean typed copy.

Images should be sent as attached (not embedded) files, on disk or as original photographs or slides.

There are four issues each year - Autumn (February), Winter (May), Spring (August) and Summer (November). Deadlines for copy and advertising are 15 January, 15 April, 15 July and 15 October, respectively.

Please send contributions to

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ADVERTISING

Please contact Monica van Wensveen on 6255 4332 or email editor@cogs.asn.au.

Canberra Organic is a unique way to reach people in the Canberra region who have an interest in organics, gardening and the environment. Our circulation is around 400.

ADVERTISING RATES

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Editor's note

Winter's on the doorstep and it's time to bring beanies, scarves and your favourite old gardening jumper out of mothballs.

Winter's *Canberra Organic* reports on the Horticultural Society's Autumn Show, follows up on last edition's pruning tips with advice on pruning pomes, celebrates the international year of the spud and introduces COGS's new special interest groups. We feature our regular tour around the COGS community gardens, Q&A from gardeners around the region and our winter planting guide.

A highlight of this issue is the hearty soup recipes sent in from readers - guaranteed to warm you up through the frosty months ahead. Our book voucher goes to Gerry Jacobson - congratulations!

It's always nice to introduce others to vegie gardening, especially youngsters. The photos on the front cover and below show two brand new organic recruits - Finn the kelpie pup resting after a hard morning in the garden (is this teaching a new dog old tricks?) and my nephew Kelly harvesting his dinner from the Mitchell garden - he is now apparently smitten with cauliflower.

And now for this issue's trivia tidbit. I was intrigued by the phrase "warm the cockles of your heart" because shellfish just don't embody warmth to me. I checked a few books which declared cockles to be small boats, the aforementioned crustacean, wrinkles (?) and purple flowers growing amidst corn crops (??), before coming across a reference to the Latin term *cochlea cordis* - the ventricles of the heart.

So rug up, keep your *cochlea cordis* warm and enjoy winter in your garden.

Monica



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John Bennett, Roz and Trevor Bruhn, Heather McGinness, Rebecca Scott, Inge Thor, Monica van Wensveen and Philip Woodhill

Cover photos

Kelly's dinner (front cover); pumpkin harvest at Mitchell and Kambah and gourds aplenty at Erindale (back cover); Finn, the helpful garden kelpie (opposite page); Graeme Davis' prize-winning dahlias (this page).



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Around the Gardens

Cook

The last three months have seen many Cook Community Gardeners reaping the rewards of their planting, watering, mulching and weeding as the (mainly vegetables) have reached the picking stage. Even if some of the produce is cheaper at Coles it's just not the same !

But it's not only vegetables that have been doing well down at the bottom of Bindubi Street since Christmas. The top corner of the garden has a magnificent display of many different varieties of dahlia. Graeme Davis has put in long hours on his dahlia patch and the results are spectacular. He has recently picked up several prizes.



Graeme's dahlia display (top) and Cook's mulch heap

Graeme, along with Keith Colls, has also put in hard work getting up a display from the garden into the recent Canberra Horticultural Show. This was a first for us and as well as encouraging some thinking and planning about timing of produce to show it to good effect, it has also provided some useful publicity for organic gardening in general and community gardens in particular.

Spreading the word on community gardening is not confined to Canberra. One of our members was in Adelaide recently at the Gardening Australia Open Day and was interested to see several stalls promoting community gardening in South Australia.

The Slow Food group has also shown an interest in organic community gardening and visited the Cook Garden in February. Keith Colls gave the group a tour of the garden and a short talk on the garden's operation.

Following Charnwood Garden's lead last year, Cook has signed up to be part of the Open Garden Scheme in 2009. More on that later but it should help to keep us all on our toes.

Now we are seeing the first frosts for 2008 and thinking about tidying up, mulching and our winter plantings.

We still have a waiting list of potential community gardeners.

John Bennett

Cotter Orchard

Autumn is nut time and while the drought has put paid to the apple crop, the hazels, pistachios, and walnuts have fared reasonably well. The group have collected good reserves of seed and rootstocks so that we can move trees closer to the irrigation infrastructure.

The Himalayan Hazels (*Corylus ferox*) produced a particularly heavy crop this year. The nuts, while bland compared to commercial hazels were interesting to taste. The trees appear far more drought hardy than other *Corylus* species and show promise as a non suckering rootstock for our drier times.

The second tree hazel found in the collection is the Turkish hazel (*C. colurna*). While these trees set a good crop this year the nuts contained no meat. The reasons for this are unclear but most likely drought related, as the trees show significant dieback.

The American walnuts (*Juglans nigra*) also produced a light crop of tasty but difficult to extract nuts. These trees are giants in their natural habitat but without water or care they are a far more manageable size and handle the drought quite well.

The pistachios have also set a good crop but these trees really need to be removed from the *Sorbus* grove to have a reasonable chance of living a healthy life. Pistachios are incredibly tough trees and well suited to Canberra's climate.

Autumn is also persimmon time and the trees yielded only small crops due to the drought. All appear to be female astringent types and bore no seeds, so we are still on the hunt for persimmon seeds.

Of note is the presence of an extremely vigorous American persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*) near the apple orchard. This tree has set a large crop of seedless thumbnail sized fruit and established a number of root suckers nearby. We have recently germinated a number of American persimmon seeds from a contributor in America so we will soon have a mate for this lonely old female tree.

On another front, the group has recently been approached to help maintain the Tuggeranong homestead heritage orchard. This promises to be an exciting opportunity as the orchard is home to a number of heritage listed fruit trees that are worth preserving.

If anyone is interested in this activity please contact Karl, after hours on 6231 1006. *Karl Adamson*

Holder

How fickle the weather has been - a cool February followed by a warm March. The end of March saw the garden receiving a couple light frosts, with gardeners still able to harvest crops. The window of opportunity for the rest of the crops to ripen was short lived, as the first week of April saw the arrival of a heavy frost wiping out these crops.

The garden has recently been a hive of activity with winter crops being planted or growing, green manures sprouting, plots being tidied up and compost piles springing up.

The water usage at the garden this growing season is way down from last few years with increases in water usage only in the season's hot and dry weeks.

There are presently two double and three single plots available. *Conrad van Hest*

Cotter

An early frost at our garden in March brought an end to those summer vegetables still producing at that time - tomatoes, beans, zucchinis and pumpkins. The frost also put an end to one gardener's very productive Burpless cucumber plants which had been grown on a low trellis - some lime had been added to the soil together with manure prior to planting the seedlings and a thick layer of mulch used.

Most gardeners have now cleared their plots and composted their vegetable matter in preparation for

winter. Some gardeners have sown green manure mixtures to prepare their plots for spring plantings (water restrictions permitting).

A number of gardeners have well established plantings of autumn and winter producing vegetables and they can look forward to a good supply of produce in the months ahead.

No vacant plots remain in the Cotter Gardens.

Roz and Trevor Bruhn



One Cotter gardener's summer plantings of autumn/winter producing vegetables (top) and a few of the pumpkins grown this year - the variety is Yates Hybrid Grey Crown (below)

Kambah

Unfortunately two members of our garden have decided for health reasons to give up their plots. We wish them the best for the future and now have a number of good plots available for anyone who would like to join us in the garden.

A busy-bee in early April was well attended and a couch infested plot was covered in a trial of three different materials - black plastic, clear plastic, and commercial weedmat. The plot will be monitored for results over the next month. The material showing the best result will be applied to other vacant plots and left

Around the Gardens

Kambah (continued)

The milder autumn weather has been a great time to start off seedlings of cabbage and cauliflower and seeds for broad beans, peas and loose leaf lettuce. The sprouting broccoli is making progress and the green manure crop is making a good showing and will be cut and left as covering for an under-sown crop of potatoes. Now all we need is some more rain.

Thanks to all our members who attended the busy-bee and cheerfully helped with the work before joining in refreshments and catching up with other gardeners and their family members.

Mary Coulson

O'Connor

Everyone's winter gardens are doing well and look so tidy and green compared to the rambling summer growth. It looks as though rain is on the way as I write this hopefully to break this long dry spell.

All kinds of plants are popping up out of the ground to grow on through the winter like the outbreaks of garlic where a corm has been missed and left in the ground through the summer and the coriander seed fallen and now coming up in a thick carpet. I would like to be as right and certain about what I am doing as they are.

Our garden had an open day that was a spectacular success through the combined efforts of everyone in the garden. It was added to by a group of musicians who came and played old Australian folk music throughout. It was attended by many locals and people from the O'Connor Uniting Church including the ethnic communities that use the church where our garden is.

Rick Zentelis at the O'Connor community open day

The weather was perfect and the situation ideal as everyone gathered in the enclosed area beside our garden, creating a great sense of place. The food cooked and prepared by the garden members was laid out on tables for all to share, which everyone did enthusiastically. A strong sense of community was there, and of sharing a place together in peace.

It surprised us all by its richness and spontaneity and the sense of life generated by all those who came. We were overwhelmed but at the same time totally pleased and enjoying it all. It gave everyone there a feeling of what community can and could be.

Philip Woodhill

Mitchell

Winter's moving in and the Mitchell garden is now brimming with brassicas and onions. Green manure is

starting to appear in some plots and carrots, sweet potatoes, Jerusalem artichokes and other root crops are becoming sweet with the first big frosts. The garden is in a small frost hollow, so any plants needing warmth and lots of light are a distant memory.



*Top: Rick Zentelis at the O'Connor community open day
Below: Andrew happy with the 'fruits' of labour, Mitchell*

For the first time in a while, the garden is full, with a couple of people on our waiting list. We welcome three new gardeners - James, Marilyn and Will, who all come with enthusiasm, new ideas and very green thumbs. Sadly, we also farewell two regulars - John and Jan - and wish them well with their future gardening (and other) pursuits.

Monica van Wensveen

Convenors needed for Queanbeyan and Mitchell gardens! Please contact Keith Colls

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In the news

Carbon farming for climate campaign

The OFA's Organic Update brings news of a 30 year trial in the US suggesting organic practices can make a significant contribution to mitigating climate change by locking up more carbon in the soil. The study showed that organic methods can annually remove around 7800kg of carbon from the air for each hectare farmed. Researchers estimate that if all of the US' 175 million hectares of cropland were converted to organic farming, it would be the equivalent of taking 217 million cars off the road.

Drought busting farming

Also from the Organic Update, a study in Wisconsin suggests that organic farming outperforms conventional in times of drought. Researchers found that organic yields were higher in drought and the same in normal weather, attributing this to the ability of organic systems to more quickly take in rainfall.

Cut down on compost

The Organic Coalition of Tasmania is warning organic farmers against overcomposting, reports ABC Online. Research has revealed over-application in some areas, potentially resulting in environmental damage including nutrient leaching and releasing extra carbon into the atmosphere.

In aquatic news..

An international group of ecologists who have spent the last four years analysing fish populations, ocean systems and catch records have concluded that the world will run out of seafood by 2048 if current rates of decline in marine species continue. On the other side, Reuters reports the Norwegian pro-whaling lobby is urging people to 'eat a whale and save the planet'. They have just released results of their study into ecological footprints that concludes that harpooning whales is less damaging to the climate than farming livestock.

Choosing chickens

According to results of a newly released Choice taste test, organically grown fast-maturing chickens don't taste significantly different to free range, corn fed or factory-farmed birds. So choose your chooks for benefits other than flavour, such as open air and a better life. Another good reason comes from UK research showing commercial organic and free range chicken farms in the study had significantly lower rates of salmonella infection than chicken barns.

Cockroaches to the rescue

Researchers in southern Texas are singing the praises of an Asian cockroach, reports the International Herald Tribune. Apparently, this creepy hero has developed an appetite for bollworms and armyworms - two pests that threaten cotton, soybean, corn and tomato crops amongst others.

Top tips for WINTER

1 Oranges and lemons

If your citrus are potted, think about moving them to a warmer, sheltered area once the frosts start in earnest. Even if your garden isn't on the same grand scale as the orangerie built for Louis XIV's 3000 citrus trees at France's Versailles Palace (below), they will be grateful for some shelter from the winter elements.



2 'Old on to your onions

Those 'in the know' hold off planting their onion seedlings until late August or September, based on the experience that early planted onions more readily go to seed. Seedbeds can be established in April and May for early and mid season varieties, and in May and June for keeping varieties.

3 Mend your mower

Winter is a good time to tend your gardening tools - here are some ideas to get you started. Check the blades of mowers and secateurs and replace or sharpen if necessary. Treat your mower and whipper snipper by cleaning the air filter and spark plugs. Grease the head of your whipper snipper and drain fuel from your mower before winter hibernation. Sharpen the blades of shovels, mattocks and hoes and check handles for splintering or cracking wood. When pruning, dip secateurs, hoppers and pruning saws into disinfectant when moving between diseased and healthy plants, and put a smear of oil on the blades when you're finished to prevent rust over winter.

"I do not like broccoli. I haven't liked it since I was a little kid and my mother made me eat it. And I'm President of the United States and I'm not going to eat any more broccoli."

Former US President George Bush, 1990

Weather Watch

Winter has finally arrived in the capital. Here's the Bureau of Meteorology's outlook for winter, taken from their long term statistics for temperature and rainfall.

TEMPERATURE	June	July	August
Canberra airport	max 12.2	max 11.3	max 13.0
	min 0.9	min -0.1	min 1.0

RAINFALL	June	July	August
Canberra airport	41.1 mm	41.3 mm	46.6 mm
	5.7 rain days	5.9 rain days	7.0 rain days

(Rain days are days with more than 1 mm rain; temperatures are degrees Celsius)

Seasonal forecast: May-July

- Across southeastern NSW, the Bureau of Meteorology reports that the chances of above average rainfall for this period are the same as the chances of below average rainfall for this time of year.
- There is an overall neutral outlook for maximum and minimum temperatures for the May to July period, with no strong swings towards warmer or cooler days expected.
- This rainfall and temperature outlook is mainly due to cooler than average water in the equatorial regions of the Pacific Ocean and warmer than average water in the Indian Ocean near Australia.
- The La Niña event in progress across the equatorial region of the Pacific Ocean is now weakening.

For more information and regular updates, visit the Bureau of Meteorology's ACT weather website: www.bom.gov.au/weather/act

Noah's Norwegian ark

Svalbard is one of the world's remotest locations. A thousand kilometres from the North Pole, it is a barren piece of icy rock off the northern tip of Norway.

It is also the site of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault - a modern day Noah's ark custom built in the side of an arctic mountain to store crop seeds from around the world.

At the opening ceremony of the vault in February, the Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenburg said "Biological diversity is under threat from the forces of nature...and from the forces of man."

"This seed vault is our insurance policy against threats such as war, natural disasters or climate change."

More than 100 countries have sent 100 million seeds to be stored in the vault, ranging from African and Asian staples such as rice, wheat, sorghum and maize to European and American varieties of common

vegetables such as lettuce, eggplant and potato. No genetically modified varieties are included.

The cost of the facility is estimated at \$10 million and big name investors include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Norwegian government, the Monsanto Corporation and the Syngenta Foundation.

The seeds - eventually 4.5 million samples or 2 billion of them - are kept at -18-20 degrees Celsius.

Even if the freezers failed, the permafrost surrounding the air-locked vault would keep the temperature at around -4 degrees. The seeds would potentially remain frozen for 200 years.

European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso also attended the opening ceremony.

"We hope and work for the best but have to plan for the worst," he said.

Sources: Reuters, Global Research, ABC News.

Hearty winter soups

Now that we know what cockles are (see page 4), let these seasonal soups warm them and you this winter.

Green Earth Soup - Gerry Jacobson

At the Cotter Garden I grow silverbeet, senposai, tuscan kale and sometimes spinach. I nearly always have two of these green vegetables available in the plot. I also grow leeks, garlic and potatoes. My gardening is really orientated towards soup making, so I am in the practice of making a pot of Green Earth Soup nearly every week. Sometimes I vary it by making Red Earth Soup but that's another story.

Most weeks I make a vegetable stock using the week's saved up vegetable trimmings and peelings, stalks, carrot and beetroot tops, and wilted leaves of green vegetables - all things that might otherwise be thrown out or composted. I cook them in water for 10 minutes or so then let the stock stand for a while and strain. The stock goes in the freezer for later use in soups, and the cooked vegetable scraps go on the compost heap.

Green Earth Soup is really a name for a soup that is essentially pureed vegetables and looks green and earthy. I started with these two basic recipes. Spinach is used here as a generic term covering silverbeet, senposai and other green vegetables (or a mixture).

Spinach and lentil soup

125 g green or brown lentils
1 large onion
1 large clove garlic
1 L unsalted veg stock or water
225 g spinach
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
2-3 tsp lemon juice

Wash the lentils and pick them over carefully, then soak them for a few hours, drain and rinse. Peel and chop onion and garlic. Add stock to lentils-onion-garlic. Bring mixture to the boil and simmer gently for about 40 minutes, until lentils are soft. While lentils are cooking, wash spinach, then chop roughly. Add spinach to the cooked lentil mixture, cover and simmer for about 10 minutes, until the spinach is soft. Puree

the soup, and season with salt, pepper and lemon juice. Serve with a dollop of cream or sour cream.

Spinach and potato soup

1 large sliced leek
2 cloves crushed garlic
1 bunch spinach
4 large potatoes, peeled and chopped
1 L veg stock
½ cup sour cream
Salt and freshly ground black pepper



Heat stock with leek and garlic. Wash spinach thoroughly, remove stalks and shred leaves. Add spinach and potatoes to stock and bring to boil, then simmer partially covered for 30 minutes or until potatoes are very soft. Cool a little and blend until smooth. Reheat without boiling, stir in sour cream, season with salt and pepper.

Cheese and cauliflower soup - Doug Andrews

This is one of my favourite winter soups (and it's a good soup for freezing). It is a derivation of a recipe from Mollie Katzen's Moosewood Cookbook.

Put into a large pot, one large cauliflower (cut into florets), 2 or 3 diced potatoes, 1 or 2 diced carrots, a clove of garlic, 1.5 cups of chopped onion, one litre or water and salt to taste.

Bring to the boil and then simmer until all vegies are tender. Puree and return to the pot.

Add two cups of grated cheese, 200 mL milk, half a teaspoon of caraway seeds and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Heat gently and serve.

Henstenpap (Stallion Soup) - Anne Green

This recipe was given to us from friends in Groningen in the eastern part of the Netherlands. It doesn't freeze well but the taste gets better the next day!

3 leeks - halved and sliced
4 carrots - halved and sliced
250g mushrooms - sliced
1 cup peas (frozen is OK but not minted)
2-3 stalks of celery
2 or more teaspoons of grated fresh ginger
2.5 litres of beef stock
A good handful of pearl barley
A few sprigs of barley
Salt and pepper

Add all the vegetables to the stock, with the ginger, parsley and pearl barley.

Bring to the boil and simmer for around 50 minutes. Season to taste and add water if the stock is too strong.

If you're a meat-eater, roll up about 100g of mince into 2cm balls. Add the meat balls to the soup and cook for another 10-15 minutes.

Carrot and coriander soup - Judith Sefton

A quick and easy soup for four people.

Heat 2 teaspoons of butter in a saucepan.
Add 1 onion and 1 leek - both roughly chopped.
Sweat for about 5 minutes.
Add 1 kg chopped carrots and sweat until soft.
Add a splash of dry white wine and reduce.
Add 3 cups of vegetable stock and simmer.
Puree until smooth and then reheat.
Add a couple of sprigs of freshly chopped coriander and some salt and pepper to taste.

Thai pumpkin and prawn soup - Kate Barrelle

A yummy winter lunch for six people. If you don't have time to make the paste, just buy some. With thanks to Nigella Lawson, Louise Riethmuller & Darlene Schmidt.

Boiled rice for six
4 cups chicken stock
1/2 pumpkin, cubed
Asian greens (eg baby bok choy)
Bunch chopped coriander
12-18 medium tiger prawns (OR substitute chick peas or fried tofu for a vegetarian version)
1 can thick coconut cream
2 kaffir lime leaves

Yellow curry paste

1-2 minced yellow chillies (substitute 1-2 green or red chillies)
1/2 stalk lemon grass, sliced finely and minced
2 sliced shallots (or 1 minced onion)
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 chopped chunk ginger (or galangal)
3 tablespoons fish sauce (or soy sauce)
1 tablespoon tomato paste
3 kaffir lime leaves (cut out inner stem)
1 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 can good-quality coconut milk
1 tablespoon brown sugar
juice of 1 lime

To make the curry paste, place all paste ingredients in a food processor (or blender) and process well. Or mince everything by hand and stir together.

Heat paste in large pot and add everything except prawns and vegies. Bring to the boil, then lower heat and simmer until pumpkin softens.

Add prawns and vegies; cover and cook for 3 minutes until prawns are pink. Reduce heat to low, add coconut milk and pull out lime leaves.

Taste-test.

If not salty enough, add more fish sauce.

If too salty, add lime juice.

If too sour, add brown sugar.

If too spicy (or if you prefer creamier), add more coconut milk

If not spicy enough, add another finely diced chilli.

Serve rice into individual bowls, ladle soup on top, and serve hot with fresh coriander.

Photo: Rebecca Scott

Winter harvest: HARDY HERBS

At a time when not much is growing in the garden, these robust herbs will add a bit of zing to your winter kitchen.

Bay

Bay trees are a beautiful evergreen addition to any garden, with dark, shiny leaves and bee-friendly cream flowers in spring. Bays prefer fertile soil and an open, sunny position, but need some protection when young. They can grow to 11m, but are easy to clip and shape.

Bay leaves can be harvested any time of the year and can be used fresh from the tree, a couple of days after picking, or dried. Bay is most commonly used to flavour soups, stews, marinades, casseroles and meats - often with parsley, thyme and peppercorns as a *bouquet garni*.

Chervil

Chervil is one of the few 'soft' herbs that flourishes in winter, as long as it is sheltered from extreme cold and is kept fairly moist. It is an annual that looks like a fern and tastes like aniseed.

Chervil has a delicate taste and is used to best effect in soups and sauces, with eggs and fish and as a garnish. With tarragon, chives and parsley, chervil makes up *fine herbes* - a great pick-me-up for plain omelettes and salads.

Mint

What would a herb garden be without at least one of the many varieties of mint? All grow from seed or runners and all have vigorous, invasive roots. They like rich moist soil and prefer a bit of shade. Common varieties include common mint, spearmint, peppermint, applemint, Asian mint and pennyroyal - all with distinct flavours.

Mint is one of the most commonly used culinary herbs and is great with peas, spuds, meat, citrus and as a garnish. It also makes a great cup of tea.

Oregano and marjoram

These two cousins (oregano is often referred to as wild marjoram) are versatile perennials that like well-drained sunny soils. They are easy to grow from cuttings in spring or autumn, or from seed in spring.

Leaves are used fresh or dried and are essential in Mediterranean cooking. Marjoram has a milder taste, and forms traditional *mixed herbs* with thyme and sage.

Rosemary

Rosemary is a spiky and aromatic perennial shrub that prefers an open, sunny position in well-drained soil. It can be grown from seed, but is more frequently propagated from cuttings in autumn. Upright rosemary can grow to around 1m; there is also a prostrate rosemary that grows to about 30cm as a ground cover.



Rosemary weathers winter well, producing fresh leaves harvest all year round. It has a strong flavour that lends itself well to soups, stuffings, vegetables, meats and fish. To enhance the aromatic impact, run hot water over the leaves just before use.

Sage

An attractive perennial with grey-green textured leaves and purple flowers. Sage prefers a sunny, well-drained position in the garden and needs little water once established. It may look a bit ragged in winter, but will still be flavoursome. Be sure not to cut sage back to its woody stem as it may not recover

well.

Sage is traditionally a medicinal herb (good for nerves, memory and digestion), but in cooking is used to counter rich flavours such as pork, poultry and game. It has a strong flavour (and dried sage has an even stronger flavour), so use sparingly.

Thyme

Hardy and versatile, thyme is a popular feature of most kitchen gardens. It likes a light soil and an open and sunny position and can be grown from seed or suckers in spring.

Thyme has a distinct fragrance that makes an invaluable contribution to soups, vegetables, stews, casseroles and stuffings.

Winter savory

Summer savory is an annual, while winter savory is a perennial, with narrow, glossy leaves and tiny white flowers. It prefers sunny, well-drained soil and can be grown from seed, cutting or division.

Savory is closely related to thyme, but with a more peppery flavour. A great companion for beans, pulses and fish and for seasonings and stuffings.

References

- From a la carte to zucchini (Anthony Barker, 1995)
- Indolent kitchen gardening (Libby Smith, 1981)

Winter planting: BROAD BEANS

Although broad beans are from the Fabaceae family, they look different and grow differently to their bean cousins.

They tend to be bushy, with square, hollow stems and without beany tendrils. They can have tall or dwarf growth habits and can produce long or short pods.

Like all beans, they fix atmospheric nitrogen and so, are also useful as a green manure. Happily, fresh broad beans taste *nothing* like canned broad beans that many of us were subjected to as kids.

Best of all, they are hardy, easy to grow and happily survive in frosty climates. Plant them in April or May for an early spring harvest.

Good varieties for this region include Early Long Pod, any of the Windsor varieties and Cole's Dwarf Prolific, but there are many more to choose from.

Site and soil

Broad beans prefer a sunny well-drained position in the garden. Ideally, the soil should be fertile, but should not have excess nitrogen or rich manure as this will promote



leaf growth rather than flower (and bean) production and will make the plant more sensitive to frost and disease.

Planting

Direct planting into roughly prepared soil is most effective, with seeds sown at a depth of 5-10cm, with 15-20cm between plants and 70cm between rows.

Germination occurs 10-14 days after sowing, but will be slower the later you sow towards winter. Soaking seeds overnight in diluted liquid seaweed is said to speed up germination.

Water seeds well directly after sowing, then not until after germination, to prevent the seeds from rotting.

Cultivating

Broad beans will need to be staked or supported to stop the plant collapsing under the weight of the mature beans.

Flowers formed during frosty weather are unlikely to set pods. Once spring arrives, pinch out the tips of the plants to encourage pod set. Try to limit water stress as this will also affect pod set.

Harvesting

Pick the pods when the seeds are fully formed but not hard. If left too long on the plant, beans are likely to be dry and less tasty.

Dig in the roots and leaves after harvest to add nitrogen to the soil.

Problems

Broad beans are prone to fungal attack - brown spots on stems and leaves - particularly if planted too closely together or if planted in soils too rich in nutrients.

Towards the end of the crop, rust - producing powdery spots on the leaves - can become a problem. Plants with black tips may suffer from root rot, caused by poor drainage. Remove affected plants and resow.

Choosing and using

Small (younger) pods can be eaten whole. When pods are larger, the beans need to be shelled and the skins removed before cooking. Freshly shelled broad beans can be frozen, blanched and then frozen or stored in the fridge for about 5 days.

Broad beans team well with bacon, cheese, eggs or on their own with butter and herbs.

References and further reading

- The Canberra Gardener
- Organic Vegetable Gardening (Annette McFarlane)
- The Farmers Market Companion (Penguin-Viking)

2008 - International Year of the Potato

Potatoes, take a bow. The UN has decreed 2008 as the year to celebrate the humble spud and to raise awareness of its importance in addressing global issues such as hunger, poverty and environmental threats.

Potato potential

Potatoes are the underground swellings (tubers) on the root-like stems of *Solanum tuberosum*. They are the world's top non-grain food commodity - and rank fourth overall, after rice, wheat and maize.

Popularity is increasing in developing countries for a range of reasons - potatoes are easy to grow even in harsh environments, they produce nutritious food quickly on small areas of land, they grow under ground so are less prone to damage, and 85% of the plant is edible.

In addition, unlike the major cereals, potatoes are not traded globally. This means that prices tend to be governed by local production costs, rather than international markets, giving them great potential as a secure food crop for low income farmers.

Historical highlights

Potatoes are native to the Andes region of South America. Peruvian Indians were the first to cultivate them, around 6000 years ago.

The invading conquistadors first took them back to Spain to impress royalty in around 1536. They spread through Europe during the following few decades

In 1609 European sailors introduced potatoes to China and in 1719 they arrived in the US.

In 1845 blight destroyed the potato crop in Ireland, depriving the Irish of their staple food. During the 'Irish Potato Famine' that followed, an estimated million people died of starvation and another million emigrated.

In 1995, potatoes became the first vegetable to be grown in space, when NASA sent them in the Columbia shuttle.

Choosing spuds

There are many varieties of potato (only a small proportion of which are available to grow or buy in Australia), but two main kinds - waxy or floury.

Waxy potatoes are translucent and feel moist. They tend to maintain their shape and consistency, but are too glutinous for mashing. Floury potatoes look brighter and grainier and feel drier. They are better for mashing and don't keep their shape as well.

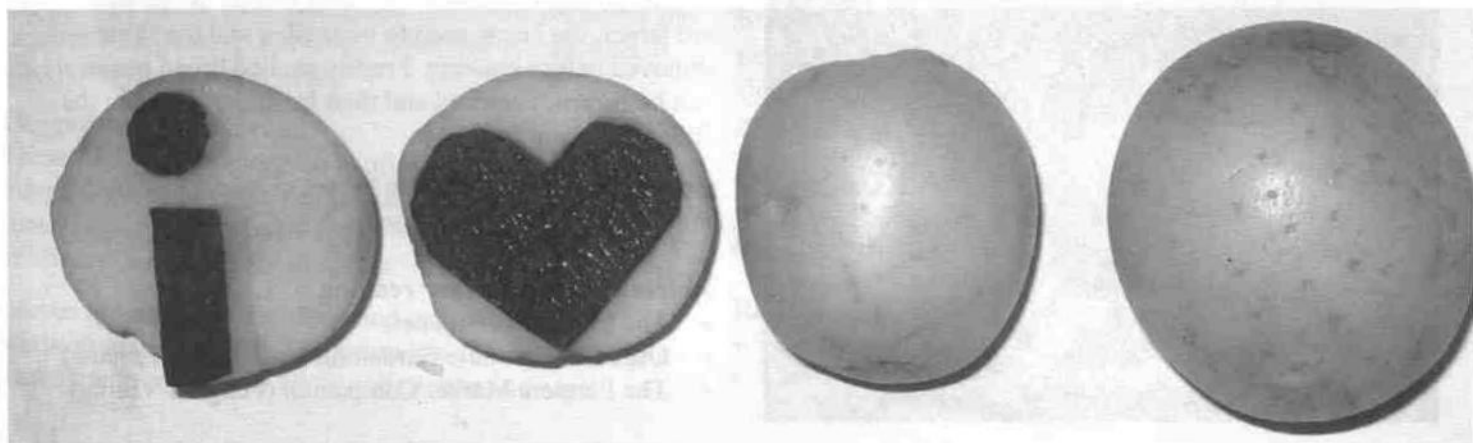
Besides that, there are new potatoes and old potatoes. New potatoes (chats) are dug when still immature and small and should be eaten relatively quickly. Old potatoes are fully mature and can be stored for months in the right place - somewhere cool, dark and airy (but not the fridge), away from onions and out of plastic.

Don't eat the green bits - they contain the alkaloid solanine which is not suitable for consumption. It's safe to eat spuds that have sprouted but they may not cook or keep well. Take the sprouts off first.

Potatoes are rich in carbohydrates and also have high levels of vitamin C and potassium. Do eat the skin as many nutrients are concentrated just underneath.

Bintje	Boiling
Coliban	Baking; mashing; steaming
Desiree	Boiling; baking; gnocchi
Kennebec	Boiling, baking, frying, mashing
Kipfler	Steaming; salads
Nicola	Mashing; baking; boiling; salads
Pink fir	Salads; boiling
Pontiac	Grating; baking; boiling
Sebago	Boiling; baking; mashing; frying

From: The Farmers Market Companion (Penguin-Viking)



Tuber Trivia

China is the biggest potato producer in the world. North America has the highest yields.

Asia consumes about half the world's potatoes, but their huge population means that per capita consumption was only 25kg in 2005.

Europeans eat the most potatoes - around 96kg per person. Africa and Latin America eat the least, but their consumption is rising.

In 2007, 320 million tonnes of potatoes were grown around the world, from an estimated 192 000 square km of farmland.

According to the Guinness Book of Records, the largest potato ever grown was 18 pounds 4 ounces.

'French fries' officially arrived in the US when Thomas Jefferson served them at a White House dinner during his 1801-09 presidency.

The potato was believed to have medicinal qualities when rubbed on the skin of sick patients.

The Peruvian Quechua language has 1000 words to describe potatoes.

Tips for growing spuds

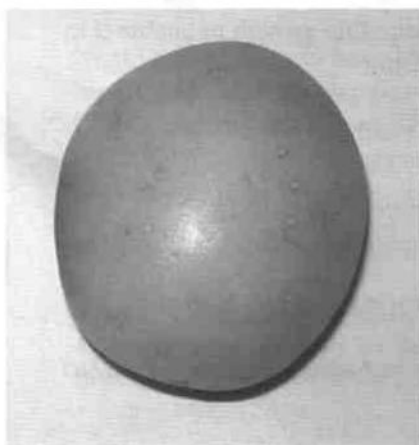
Potatoes are easy to grow in the right place. They prefer well-drained, well-composted, well-dug soils.

Use certified seed potatoes as these are guaranteed to be free of disease. You could also try shop- or market-bought potatoes or those saved from a healthy plant as a starter for a home crop.

Plant them 10-15cm deep with 25cm between plants and 75cm between rows.

Try to avoid beds that have grown the tomato family as they may have attracted soil nematodes.

Plant in September - December for a summer/autumn harvest.



For much much more information about potatoes, visit:

www.potato2008.org

www.britishpotatoes.co.uk

The Canberra Gardener
Organic Veg Gardening
(Annette McFarlane)

Canberra water update



The ACT is still under Stage 3 water restrictions. Handheld hoses with trigger nozzles, drippers, watering cans and buckets can be used between 7-10am or 7-10pm under the odds and evens system.

In May, our ACTEW road signs (seen here in autumn twilight) say our target is 112 ML per day.

More info: www.actew.com.au

Vegie of the Issue



This multi-headed beast comes from Trevor and Roz Bruhn from the Cotter Garden.

"The single carrot appears to have formed from 3 seedlings as 3 normal carrot tops are present. On cutting the carrot about 1 cm from the top only a single carrot cross-section was evident."

Pruning deciduous fruit trees - Pome fruits

Autumn's *Canberra Organic* featured an article on the hows, whys and whens of pruning stone fruit. This issue, we focus on the pomes.

The most commonly grown pome fruits are varieties of apples and pears. Other less frequently seen members of this group include quinces, crab apples, loquats and medlars.

Pruning of apples and pears is traditionally carried out during winter while the trees are dormant. Any pruning should always include the removal of dead, damaged or diseased wood and the removal of any suckers which have grown up from below the graft.

Apples

Apples are a medium sized deciduous tree which will grow to 10 or 15 metres if left unpruned. Either dwarfing rootstock or regular pruning is used to restrict apples to a more manageable size.

As with all fruit tree pruning it is important to know where the next years fruit will occur so that fruiting wood is not inadvertently pruned off.

Apples fruit mainly on short permanent spurs arising from wood older than two years. Some varieties such as Jonathon and Golden Delicious will also produce smaller quantities of fruit on the ends of the previous seasons growth.

Young apple trees can be trained either to a vase shape or a pyramid shape. Whichever shape you chose aim to produce four or five main limbs with a couple of secondary limbs arising from each. Once this framework is in place annual pruning is directed to the development of fruiting spurs arising either directly from the main branches or from well placed laterals.

Remove any inward growing branches, any crossing or rubbing branches and any overly vigorous vertical growth. Leaders should be cut back to control the overall height of the tree. Pruning to an existing well placed lateral is preferable to pruning to a bud as it will result in less rampant vertical growth the following season.

Laterals arising directly from the main branches should be pruned back by half to two thirds to encourage them to develop fruiting spurs. Prune to a downward facing bud to produce more horizontal growth and encourage the earlier formation of fruiting spurs.

Any inappropriately placed or crowded laterals can be removed entirely. For those varieties which also fruit on the previous seasons lateral growth, the laterals should be thinned rather than pruned back.

Once developed, fruiting spurs may need thinning to ensure the fruit has adequate room to develop without over-crowding.

Pears

The pruning of pears is very similar to that of apples.

However many varieties of pear commonly bear on one year old laterals as well as on spurs arising from older wood.

For this reason some well placed laterals are left unpruned to develop spurs along their length. Other laterals can be either be shortened back to a couple of buds to develop into a permanent spur or removed entirely.



Fruiting spurs on a Nashi pear

Quinces

Quinces require less formal pruning than either apples or pears in order to bear well. Fruit is borne singly on one year old laterals and also on short sprigs which arise from these.

Annual pruning need only remove over crowded growth and shorten any long thin growth to enable it to better support the heavy fruit.

References and further reading

- Glowinski, L 1991, *The complete book of Fruit Growing in Australia*, Lothian Books
- Kilpatrick, D 1968, *Pruning for the Australian gardener*, Rigby
- Baxter, P 1981 *Growing Fruit in Australia*

Words and photo: Adrienne Fazekas

Making a show of community gardening

Organic produce is a winner at the Horticultural Society of Canberra's March Show.

Readers of previous editions of *Canberra Organic* will know that this is the first year the Horticultural Society of Canberra included a new competition section in their March Show specifically for produce grown a community garden.

Holder and Cook gardens provided entries and both were of a very high standard as can be seen from the photographs here.

From my (admittedly biased) perspective they were a great credit to COGS gardeners. The COGS entries generated much interest in visitors to the show - Many thanks to Graeme Davis for fielding their numerous questions.

Thanks also to Graeme for getting us sufficiently organised to provide entries and for encouraging the Horticultural Society to create the new community garden section for their March show.

This show attracts a large number of visitors. Good quality entries provide excellent publicity for COGS and although this year's effort was somewhat experimental it was an extremely successful publicity event.

Next year we hope to have a much bigger and better display from COGS gardens and I strongly urge all COGS community gardens to provide entries.

Words and photos: Keith Colls

*Top: Cook Garden's display
Middle: Holder Garden's display
Bottom: COGS Corner at the HSOC
March Show*



COGS Special Interest Groups

Are you fired up about vegetable growing in Canberra? Are you blazing with curiosity, have knowledge to burn or alight with questions? Join one of COGS's new Special Interest Groups!

In preparation for the 2008/2009 growing season COGS intends to establish Special Interest Groups to test a range of vegetable crops suitability for growing in Canberra backyards and community gardens, and for other qualities such as taste and aesthetics.

As experienced gardeners know, over the years a huge number of varieties of common vegetables have been developed but very few are available from commercial seed suppliers.

Specialist seed suppliers and organisations such as Seed Savers have a much wide range of seed. However, detailed information on the characteristics of the various varieties is often not available or is difficult to obtain. It is hoped the Special Interest Groups will be able to remedy this situation.

It is proposed that each Special Interest Group (SIG) will focus on a particular vegetable, - for example bush beans, pumpkins, tomatoes. The members of each SIG will first seek out as much information as possible on the varieties that have been developed and their characteristics such as size, colour, taste, soil and climate requirements, life cycle, disease resistance and growth information (such as planting time, duration from seed to maturity).

Group members will then seek to source seed for as many varieties of the chosen vegetable as possible for testing in our gardens during in the next growing season. A range of the plant characteristics will be recorded during the season. The work of the SIGs will culminate in a report and taste test of mature vegetables at a COGS monthly meeting. This information will be available to all COGS members.

If you are interested in participating in one of these SIGs please contact me by phone or e-mail (preferably by 30 May) to indicate if you have a preference for growing any particular vegetable.

There is no need to be an experienced gardener to participate in these groups. All that is required in addition to normal vegetable growing is the recording of a few growth characteristics of the test plants during the season.

More detail of what is involved will be provided at the COGS June monthly meeting.

Keith Colls

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Here & there: Frenchs Forrest Farmers Market

If you're at Sydney's northern beaches on a Sunday morning, the Frenchs Forest Organic Food and Farmers Market is the place to go for fresh produce, entertainment and even a free hug..

All year round, Sunday mornings see the French's Forrest Farmers Market take over the carpark of the Parkway Hotel in Sydney's northern beaches region.

With a cosy, communal atmosphere, they are an alluring mix of produce market (both certified organic and non-organic stalls) and craft market (crystals, hammocks, hand woven clothing and hemp products).

The markets are located in a major suburban area, so not everything is locally made or grown. Produce is definitely fresh and there are lots of tasty things to sample as you shop, including a fantastic selection of herbs, seeds and teas; dried fruit and nuts; organic milk, butter and cheese; blue mountains pies and breads; fresh pasta and smoked seafood.

You can also try out the organic skin care products, oxygen supplements, and have a massage while you wait for your freshly brewed coffee.

If that's not enough to get you up and about on a Sunday morning, there are live musicians to entertain, free hugs from the 'wisdom for living' people and you can also receive 'free light' with a session at the Sukyo Mahikari tent.

Interestingly, the stallholder that came out with the best credentials when all stalls were tested against organic guidelines, was a lovely old Italian market gardener, who has never bothered to gain organic certification, but who is always swamped by keen and loyal customers.

Every Sunday 8:30am-1pm, Frenchs Forrest Road East.

Words and photos by Inge Thor



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Level Three - Sat 6 & Sun 7 December

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COGS WINTER PLANTING GUIDE

VEGETABLES

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.

FRUIT

Winter is the usual time to plant and prune 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.

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

S = seed sowing; T = transplanting

Q&A @ COGS

Q "We had a good crop of apples this year but quite a few had **codling moth**. We currently spray with bordeaux mixture but are changing to a lime sulphur one this year. What other organic methods are available to control this pest?"

A Fenthion and other chemicals registered for the control of codling moth are not allowed under the National Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Produce. In an urban situation it can be quite difficult to control codling moth organically, particularly if neighbours do not also have a control program for their fruit trees or ornamentals that also have codling moth.

On the positive side, although male codling moths can travel up to about 180m, female moths are relatively immobile. In an orchard situation females will not travel more than 6 to 8 trees. So if you are not surrounded by neighbours' infected trees it is possible to disrupt the moth's life cycle in your own garden by careful garden hygiene - that is by minimising the number of places the grubs and pupae can hide in the vulnerable stage of their life cycle.

In Canberra there are usually 2 or 3 generations per year. Moths start laying eggs in spring on fruit and nearby leaves in the late afternoon when temperatures exceed 15 to 16 degrees C. The eggs hatch in a bit over a week and the grubs (about 1.5mm long at this stage) make their way onto the fruit and bore into it.

The grubs are vulnerable to insecticide before they bore into the fruit but after that they are fairly safe from insecticide. Nothing much can be done about them while they are in the fruit except by picking and destroying the fruit (and the grub with it). All infected and fallen fruit should be collected at least every 7 days and destroyed.

The next stage of the life cycle when the insect is vulnerable is when the grub leaves the fruit to either pupate or to overwinter as a grub. At this stage the gardener can have some success in disrupting their life cycle by removing their hiding places.

Grubs pupate and hibernate usually between or under flaps of bark on the tree, in tree crotches, in any old boxes or tree props under the tree and sometimes in the dry soil under the tree. If you have chooks allow them to scratch under the tree as they are very good at seeking out and eating any grubs in the soil.

Remove old boxes and rubbish from under trees where the grubs may hide. In December, February/March and in winter, carefully inspect tree trunks and branches. Brush off loose bark and destroy any grubs and cocoons you find. You can also trap the grubs by wrapping corrugated cardboard or hessian around the trunk and branches to provide them with a hiding place. Start no later than November and remove the wrapping each month, destroying any grubs and cocoons you find.

If you have had a bad infection one year you may also lose fruit the next year. However, if you continue to be vigilant in seeking the overwintering grubs the following winter and carry out the above procedures throughout the following and future summers, your population of codling moth will hopefully be sufficiently reduced to be less of a problem.

At this stage there are no effective biological controls available to backyard growers. It may be worthwhile trying insect exclusion bags over the fruit next year. They physically stop the moth laying eggs on the fruit but it may still be possible for the eggs laid on leaves to hatch and for the grubs to crawl under the bag to the fruit. I have not used them myself yet so I am not sure how effective they are.

You can make these yourself or buy them commercially. See www.greenharvest.com.au for more information. This website also has a-couple of other suggestions for dealing with codling moth.

Keith Colls



Question on notice!

"Does anyone in the COGS network know the secret of **preserving plums** so they turn out like the prunes you buy commercially?"

Yes! COGS member Gordon Jarrott from Young has the answers and is putting them to paper for the spring *Canberra Organic*.

If you can't wait that long, contact Gordon by phone on 02 6382 7642 or by mail at PO Box 1296, Young, NSW, 2594.

Please send Q&A@COGS questions or responses to editor@cogs.asn.au or to the COGS post box.

COGS NOTICE BOARD

Don't forget to check the COGS website at www.cogs.asn.au for updates and new notices.

Speakers

7:30 pm at our new venue
MAJURA COMMUNITY CENTRE
ROSEVEAR PLACE DICKSON

A Plant Clinic will be held at all monthly meetings. Please bring any pest or disease problems for identification and share your experience with other gardeners.

26 May 2008

Beer brewing & growing local hops
Tom Kaminskis

25 June 2008

2008-09 growing season in review;
COGS Special Interest Groups

22 July 2008

Sprouts, propagation and seeds
Barbara Schreiner

Events

Organic Conversion and Expansion:

Your steps to sustainable success

21-22 May 2008, Launceston TAS

The conference features a range of
Australian experts on organic systems

For more info, visit

www.farmpoint.tas.gov.au

True Fertility

14-18 June 2008, Lardner VIC

Seminar, review and workshops on
soil biology, chemistry and structure

For more info, visit

www.agriculturalsolutions.com.au

ACTEW Stage 3 water restrictions apply in all COGS gardens

Handheld hoses with trigger nozzles,
drippers, watering cans or buckets
can be used 7-10 am or 7-10 pm
on the odds and evens system.

No watering is allowed outside these hours

OFA constitution review

The Organic Federation of Australia's
constitution will be reviewed this year to see
if and where it can be improved.

The constitution is available on the
OFA website: www.ofa.org.au.

Submissions must be lodged with the
OFA secretariat before 30 June.

Organic Gardening course

CIT Solutions

Beginners Organic Gardening

Sunday 11 May to Sunday 1 June
Weston Campus, Sundays 1-4pm

For information, call 6207 4441 or visit
www.citsolutions.cit.act.edu.au

Canberra farmers markets

Northside: Saturdays 8am - 11am
Capital Region Farmers Market
EPIC (entry near Shell service station)

Southside: Sundays 9am—noon
CIT Southside Campus
Entry via Ainsworth Street in Phillip

Environment calendar

- World Environment Day - 5 June
- World Population Day - 11 July
- National Tree Day - 29 July
- Biodiversity Month - September