

A P R I L 2 0 1 6

Community Garden 3231

Growing food, friendships and community



Coordinator's comments

It's great news that CG3231 is now safe in its current location. Our garden has been recognised as making a significant contribution to the community – something we've known all along. Hopefully the final design of the new development will add to our garden – perhaps there will be some shared facilities such as a BBQ and composting bays. What do you think?

Our membership has increased by 28 per cent in the last 12 months! Please make new members Therese and David Hutchens welcome and encourage them to share the produce. Thanks to Surf Coast Shire for funding two large wicking beds. These will reduce our water use and prevent root invasion from the gum tree. However, installing them will require lots of muscle as we need to remove two existing beds.

Helpers are still needed for the Recycle Shop on 28 May. It's good fun, raises money and you never know what bargains you'll find. See Daryl Love if you can help.

See you in the garden.

Gretel

Speaker on compost

Brian Brennan from Bellbrae Organics will speak at CG3231

on

Saturday 2 April 2016

11 – 12 pm

- A demonstration of a home composting system and how it works. Brian makes and sells these composting systems.
- A discussion of permaculture principles as they might apply to CG3231.

Please note the working bee will run from 9 – 11 am and will be followed by Brian's talk.

Next working bees

Saturday
2 April 2016

Prepare beds for planting winter veg, make compost, harvest last of summer.

Sunday
17 April 2016

To be advised

Saturday
7 May 2016

To be advised



Ask Kim

DON'T FORGET ... if you have a plant-related question 'Ask Kim' at: kneubecker@iinet.net.au

How do you save tomato seeds?

Saving your own seed means that if you have particular success with a plant variety you can replicate it next growing season. Over time, seed saved this way adapts to the conditions it is grown in and the plant becomes more 'fit' for your garden.

If you are interested in saving your own seed, tomatoes are a good place to start. It is an easy process and they are self-fertile, so mostly come true to type.

Step 1

Firstly, the sad part. You need to sacrifice the loveliest, lushest tomato you've grown – the one you can't wait to eat. This helps to ensure that the tomatoes you grow next year will have the same qualities.



Step 2

Let the tomato become very ripe then squeeze the pulp out of it and into a shallow bowl of water.

Leave this pulp, watery liquid standing for a couple of days. This will help to separate the seed from the pulp. Don't worry if the water gets a bit mouldy or smells as if it's fermenting – that's ok.



Step 3

Next, pour the whole lot through a sieve. Hopefully most of the pulp will disappear with the water but don't worry if a bit is left behind.

Slap the remaining seed onto some kitchen paper and leave in an airy place to dry – somewhere like a windowsill.



Step 4

When the paper is perfectly dry, roll it up and put it in a container with some desiccant (silica to absorb moisture). I use old vitamin pill jars as they exclude light, come with their own desiccant and are a good size.

Label the jar and store in a cool place for next spring. When it is time to sow, you can either separate the seeds or just tear off a piece of paper and plant it.





Tastes of the Garden

Sunday 20 March

On Sunday 20 March we held the inaugural Tastes of the Garden where garden members, friends and community members were all invited to taste a range of fresh garden produce.

Tomatoes were the key feature of the event. Participants had the opportunity to taste eight varieties of tomato: Grosse, Lisse, Black Russian, Black Cherry, Pink Bumble Bee, Tigerella, Wild Sweetie and Green Zebra and a mystery variety, possible Prince Borghese, which had self-sown. Tasters were asked to vote for their favourite. **BLACK CHERRY** and **PINK BUMBLEE BEE** were equal winners. These two varieties will be grown again next year.

Keeping with the tomato theme, gazpacho was on taste – yummm. It was delicious, thanks Tania. Pickles and relishes also featured with different green tomato relishes, tangy green tomato pickle and a tomatillo kasundi on taste. While the tasters all had a favourite, Gretel and Gay's green tomato chutney seemed a winner with a number of jars being purchased by happy tasters.

In addition, we had homemade pesto including basil, coriander and chilli; chervil, dill, walnut and anchovy.

A big thank you to those who made and brought the dips and chutneys along to taste and to everyone who contributed to making this inaugural event such a success. We look forward to holding one next year.

Sue Guinness



Summer Training Series

Terrence Hoffmann

The second and third training events were held over the last fortnight to complete the Summer Training for Gardeners series. Overall the series was deemed a success by those attending.

Managing your garden for successful production

was lead by Andrew Laidlaw (Garden expert Saturdays 774 and a director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne). It was held at Danawa on Sunday 24 January and the event was well patronised with over 60 people there. Andrew spoke about a range of basic factors that effect the success of a garden. The soil, water availability and choice of plants to grow was the basis of his message. He illustrated this by describing a project he was doing in Gaza, building a new garden combined with a children's garden and community garden. All this on eight acres of desert-like soil with little available water. He also mentioned the importance of having a clear vision and how important that has been for the RBG to have survived as long as they have. He encouraged us to ensure that our vision was able to drive the garden into the future.

Raising crops from seed gathering to harvesting

was delivered by Mike Robinson-Koss (Director, Otway Greening in Deans Marsh). Held at Anglesea CG on Wednesday 17 February the event also attracted more than 60 people. Mike spoke about seed gathering for his native plant nursery as well as about varieties of native foods. He spoke about propagation methods too and how to simply manage this process. An engaging speaker, he left us wanting more. The Anglesea garden committee have already asked about visiting his nursery at some time to hear more of his message. I have asked him and he has agreed to a visit.

Improving the soil was the topic delivered by Andrew Lucas from Geelong Compost. Held at Community Garden 3231 on 26 February the event attracted around 30 people. Andrew gave us some insights into improving soil, the role of compost, how some additives were useful for some crops but not others and something of the chemistry involved in the managing of soils for growing food. He was a very knowledgeable speaker with much to tell us about what we are doing.

The evening concluded with light snacks at the Aireys Pub where a great time was had.

For those able to attend the Summer Training Series the rewards were to meet fellow gardeners from other community gardens as well as learn new things to apply in their own gardens. Advertising on Facebook attracted attendees from community gardens in Geelong and as far away as Anakie, over the three events.



Tasting recipes

Pesto

1 cup tightly packed herb leaves
 ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
 30 g nuts
 2 cloves garlic, crushed
 salt
 60 g grated parmesan cheese

Blend herbs oil, nuts, garlic and salt until smooth in a food processor.
 Stir in cheese
 Store in covered in refrigerator.

Possible combinations

Classic basil and pine nuts
 Dill, walnuts and anchovy
 Chervil and walnuts
 Coriander, walnuts and chilli

Gretel Lamont

Gazpacho

1 l tomato juice
 6-8 large tomatoes, peeled and chopped
 4 cloves crushed garlic
 2 chopped green and red peppers
 1 chopped cucumber
 handful of chopped pitted black olives
 chopped mint and spring onions
 good olive oil
 vinegar; white, balsamic or apple cider, depending on taste
 salt and pepper

Process tomatoes in food processor until smooth with the garlic.
 Put in a bowl with all chopped veggies, mint, olives and spring onions.
 Add olive oil and vinegar.
 Make at least one day ahead and taste, adjusting salt, pepper, oil and vinegar.
 Serve with good bread

Tania Teague

Spicy Green Tomato Chutney

1.5 kg green tomatoes, chopped
 500 g granny smith apples, peeled, cored, chopped finely
 500 g onions, chopped finely
 1 tsp sea salt
 1 tsp black pepper, freshly ground
 200 g white sugar
 1 tbsp ginger, fresh minced
 1 tsp cumin seeds
 400 ml malt vinegar

- Put all ingredients into a large non-reactive saucepan, note it does cook down so it can just fit into pan.
- Bring slowly to a boil and stir until the sugar has dissolved. Keep at a light boil, uncovered, over medium heat until the chutney thickens, which could take a little over an hour. Stir regularly to prevent sticking.
- When the chutney is soft and thick, but not catching on the bottom of the pan, ladle into warmed, sterilised jars, allow to cool, then seal.
- Store in cool dry place for at least one month (or up to 12 months) before eating. Refrigerate after opening.

Gabriel Fuller

Tangy Green Tomato Pickle

750g green tomatoes
 ½ cup peeled fresh ginger cut into fine matchsticks
 1 medium onion, diced
 ½ tsp salt
 1 ½ cups sugar
 ½ tsp mustard seeds
 ½ cup lemon juice
 2 kaffir lime leaves shredded

Cut tomatoes into wedges and place in a bowl with ginger, onion and salt. Leave overnight. Next day, strain juices into a non-aluminium pan. Stir in sugar, bring to the boil and cook for about 5 minutes or until syrupy. Add tomatoes, ginger, onion, mustard seeds, lemon juice and kaffir lime leaves. Simmer for 10 minutes or until mixture is a soft, jam-like consistency. Remove from heat and pour into jars.

TIPS

- A hint of Thai flavours makes this relish great with fish, shellfish, curries and most meat.
- Use only green tomatoes in this recipe as ripe fruit is too sweet and doesn't hold its shape as well when cooked.

Jo Murray