



April 2023
47 years of growth
1976-2023



The Doncaster Garden Club Committee meeting will be held on
Wednesday 5th April 2023

8:00 pm at 11 Inglewood Close, Doncaster East.

The April meeting of the Doncaster Garden Club will be held on
Wednesday 12 April 2023

At 8pm at the RSL Hall, corner Doncaster Road and Leeds Street, Doncaster East.

The speaker for April is Seila Heirk....speaking on Asian Winter Veggies

May Meeting...Subject; Iris...Speaker; Terry R Nisbet

Committee Members 2023

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Gardeners All,

Finally, I am picking a few cucumbers, pulling out one lot of climbing beans and throwing all diseased plant matter (downy mildew and blight) into the Council bin, not my compost, where it would likely add more spores to the soil to perpetuate the diseases. The rats are trying to eat apples on the tree and knocking them off, grrr 😡. Now to plan which beds go to leafy greens and which to root crops as I will add mycorrhiza fungi, seaweed granules, compost and rock dust only (soil remediation) for root crops and these plus rooster booster & blood and bone (fertiliser) for the leafy ones. Hopefully the tomatoes stay another month or six weeks then I can plant a 2nd crop of broccoli in their place but there are very few fruits remaining. The rare one had fruit fly. The red leaf Amaranth I was given has been picked for stir fry 2-3 times & now going to seed. The self-sown Perpetual Spinach is also being picked. The sweet potatoes have grown so poorly they may not produce any root crop.



I hope you have all tried our website -

doncastergardenclubaus.com - and even checked the old newsletters for the same time of year to see if there is a different article on a particular plant. I will have my saved seeds available for sale on the Trading Table again: Aquilegia (Granny's Bonnets), 2 sorts of Marigold, Calendula, Perpetual Spinach, English Silver beet, Crinkly Silver beet, Bok Choy, etc. Do bring envelopes for them and pay with a donation.



Elsie has joined Toni at the Trading Table to help with the busyness. **Please will everyone be aware that the Trading Table needs items to be paid for - often a small donation to the Club.**

(Continued on page 3)

DGC LIFE MEMBERS

Gerda van der Peet
Ted Page
Doug Brewer
Joanne Driver
Ken Beer
Elsie Carter
Toni Myers
Bev Turner
Gayle McCann



NEW MEMBERS

Margaret Salter
Nola Chan
Stephen Camilleri



APRIL SUPPER ROSTER

- Elsie Carter
- Alison Ray
- Alana Camilleri



March Guest Speaker:

Penny Woodward

penny@pennywoodward.com.au

ph.: 0412 057 038

Subject:

Garlic

Garlic comes in over 300 cultivars, most of which will grow in Melbourne.

Before planting your garlic, choose a spot in full sun, with good drainage...prepare your soil... which should be slightly alkaline (if not add some lime). Dig in some good organic matter.

Plant your garlic from late March till early June. Plant 15cm apart the depth of the clove below the soil... add some blood and bone and a layer of mulch (sugar cane or pea straw). Start to feed after the shortest day to promote large cloves.



The garlic plant will produce scapes which should be removed when they are young and flexible, which can then also be eaten.

Harvest your garlic when it has been in the soil for eight months, there should be 4-6 green leaves left. You can also harvest some early and eat as green garlic.

Garlic cloves once harvested should be cured in a cool dry environment, leaving the leaves on... (so flavour can go back into bulb) until properly dried.

HOT TIP.... when choosing cloves to plant,

Eat the Little ones and save the Big ones for Planting

Choose cloves that have just begun to sprout (barely visible), plant with the base to the bottom. Do not separate your cloves more than 24 hours before you intend to plant, you can soak in a mild seaweed solution up to 24 hours before planting (but no longer).

Once cured, store in an open weave basket, in a cool, dry, constant temperature, not your shed which is usually subject to large temperature fluctuations. Avoid all humidity.

GARLIC -- 3 HEALTH TIPS FOR YOU RIGHT NOW

Research shows that garlic is, indeed, a powerful anti-cancer and pro-immune-health food.

It contains antioxidants that help protect against Alzheimer's and dementia.

It may also help reduce blood pressure, reduce "bad" LDL cholesterol, detoxify heavy metals in the body, and even help combat sickness such as the common cold.

However,...

1) To enjoy maximum health benefits of garlic, choose **fresh garlic** over bottled.

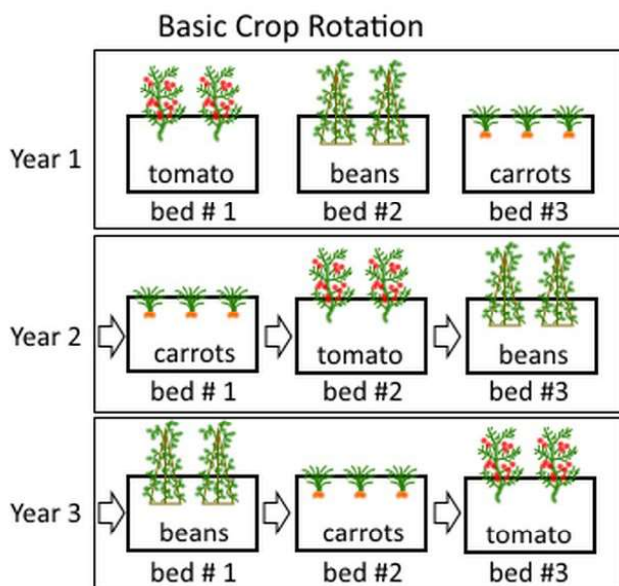
That's because "allicin" -- the powerful immune-boosting and cancer-fighting compound in garlic -- is most potent in fresh cloves.

Research out of Japan found that crushed garlic stored in water lost about half its allicin in 6 days, while crushed garlic stored in oil lost that much in under 3 hours!



Crop Rotation

Pauline says: For those who had tomatoes growing for summer do grow a leafy vegetable for winter ie cabbage, kale, silverbeet or peas. These utilise the spare nutrients left from tomato growing. The soil will need an inch or two of compost and a little rooster booster pellets (no pellets for peas). Then, in spring plant root crops again with an inch or two of compost.



The situation of the stolen Christmas Raffle Prize has been resolved satisfactorily: the person who walked it out the door was asked to bring it for another person who has not been present this year.

Monthly Meeting.

Flower, Plant and Fruit Displays

April	Fruit & Vegetables
May	Cut Flowers
June	Potted Plants
July	Fruit & Vegetables
August	Cut Flowers
September	Potted Plants
October	Fruit & Vegetables
November	Cut Flowers



March winner: **Heather Smith**

Category: Potted Plant

President's message,

continued from front page

🧑‍🌾 Duty Done! Avril and Trevor, Margaret and I 'manned' a table to represent DGC at the Eastern Volunteers Expo this afternoon. We handed out about 40 membership forms to people interested in gardening, including a father with 2 teenagers at high school and a friend of one who were very interested in joining! How great is that - they learn a bit at school and wish to know more! We will definitely encourage them. Many people indicated they will visit us. Please all try to speak to visitors - it's so important to be seen as friendly for us to grow.

I am enclosing the link for a very good article on when and how to repot houseplants:

<https://laidbackgardener.blog/2023/03/03/why-repot-houseplants/>

Happy Gardening,

Pauline

Baking Soda for the Garden

1. INSECT repellent

To keep the critters away, mix one tablespoon of olive oil, two tablespoons of baking soda, and a couple of drops of liquid soap with a gallon of water. Spray it in the garden every three days. Gently spray this mixture in the garden every three days to keep the bugs away.

Mix flour and baking soda in equal amounts and dust any produce growing with Cabbage worms, and you will destroy them.

Mix 5 tablespoons of baking soda with the same amount of powdered sugar, and a tablespoon of water, and pour the mixture into anthills. Add a bit of vinegar, and you'll reduce the ant population around the garden.

2. Fungus, Mildew, and Weeds

To get rid of the fungus in the garden, mix 4 teaspoons of baking soda with one gallon of water, and apply the mixture to problem areas.

To protect the fruits and veggies from mildew, spray them with a mixture of one tablespoon of baking soda, 2.5 tablespoons of horticultural oil, and one gallon of water.

To get rid of weeds, especially crab grasses that grow between the cracks in your walkways, moisten the area, and add a thick layer of baking soda into the cracks to create a paste.

3. Soil & Compost

To test the pH of the soil, you'll need half a cup of baking soda and half a cup of vinegar. Next, get two samples of soil and place them into separate containers. Pour vinegar into one of the samples, and if it bubbles, its pH is above seven or alkaline. In case it doesn't, add baking soda with half a cup of water to the other sample, and if it bubbles now, it is acidic.

To decrease the intense odour of compost, sprinkle just a bit of baking soda on the top of the pile.

4. Taste and look of the plants

Tomatoes are sweeter when grown in less acidic soil, so sprinkle a bit of baking soda in the soil around them.

To stimulate the blooming of begonias, hydrangeas, and geraniums, water them monthly with a unique tonic made of two quarts water and one tablespoon baking soda.

To make your lilies, iris's, geraniums, and daisies grow healthier and brighter, before watering them, add some baking soda to the water.

5. Cleaning

































Use baking soda to clean the decorations in your garden. Wash them with a quart of warm water and two tablespoons of baking soda. Dip a brush into the mixture and scrub the stains away.

Baking soda is excellent for cleaning the garden walkways as well. When they become covered in weeds and grimy, wash them with the same mixture, and they will become beautiful again.

Clean and deodorize the garden tools with baking soda.

Planting guide for April

Cool Zone (which includes Melbourne)

Fruit & Vegetables		Herbs	Flowers
 Beetroot	 Spring Onion	 Chives	 Alyssum
 Broad Bean	 Onion	 Coriander	 Cineraria
 Cabbage	 Swede	 Garlic	 Cyclamen
 Carrot	 Turnip	 Mint	 English Daisy
 Cauliflower		 Oregano	 Lupin
 Chinese Cabbage		 Parsley	 Pansy
 Citrus		 Lemongrass	 Primula
 Shallot		 Rosemary	 Snapdragon
 Silver beet		 Tarragon	 Sweet Pea
 Spinach			



Q: How do brains say "HELLO"

A: With a brain wave!

Q: What do you call a man without a spade?

A: Douglas (Dug less)



Ryset

The Committee each have a Ryset catalogue and an online pricelist to share with members. (Thousands of products) The Club receives wholesale prices which are usually the retail price discounted by 60-70%. Do ask to borrow the catalogue. Everyone can go to Ryset for their own order 30 Kolora Rd Heidelberg West 3081. Enquiries: info@ryset.com Ph: 9457 1291

Butcher

Brendan's Butcher

Jackson Court

(Next to fruit shop)

Mensland

- 39 The Mall, Heidelberg West



Predators in the Garden

With the cool nights of a week or so ago, I have heard a rat in our ceiling. It happens each year, so it is time to do baits to annihilate them.

Putting out rat bait reduces their predation in the veggie patch!

To use baking soda as rat poison, you need to follow certain steps for it to work:



1. The first one to do is to put on disposable gloves. You must make sure that you do not touch any of the chemicals and substances you use during the process. You would not want to be harmed by its contents.
2. The second step is to combine one cup of flour or cornmeal with 1 cup of sugar or powdered chocolate mix.
3. Then add 1 cup of baking soda and mix it thoroughly. The chocolate mix or the sugar attracts the rats to eat it and the baking soda will soon kill them once it has been consumed.
4. There are many ways to place this trap. You could use unused Tupperware, jar lids, or any other container to put the baking soda poison.
5. But to target these rats where it hurts them the most, you need to put the poison to places where they are most active. You can put it around your garbage bin, or in the unused and dark places in your home where these rats hide.

You can also put some around the drainage areas outside your home to target these rats before they start to come inside.

GARLIC

Bed preparation

- Rotate beds by growing garlic only once every three years in the same bed to minimise pest and disease pressure.
- Enrich soils before planting with your own composts, aged manures, blood and bone, potash and gypsum. Neutrog's Gyganics and Seamungus are terrific or try my Complete Organic Fertiliser included in the BIOPRO packs.
- Please avoid the plastic bagged manures and composts from hardware stores. We find most of these will harm your soils and cause germination failure or distress to young seedlings.
- Check your soil pH is between 6.5 - 7.0 and adjust using elemental sulphur if it is too alkaline or lime if too acidic.
- Garlic is best grown in raised beds or 30cm high ridged mounds (when grown in ground) to provide free drainage around the basal plate and main root area.

When to plant

- Keep your garlic seed bulbs in good condition by storing them in a warm and dry place, out of direct sunlight and with good ventilation in a woven basket or cardboard box with crumbled paper in the bottom and around the garlic - but not plastic or glass which cause condensation and moulds.
- Plant your garlic within the time range indicated in the above table for each garlic group. If you are in a warmer climate - plant during the earlier month indicated, or if in a cooler climate plant during the later month.

Spacing

- With the variable season's we are having, we recommend you use row spacing of 20cm and clove spacing of 20cm within the rows. This is the best spacing to optimise plant health and bulb size, and minimise pest and disease risk.



Planting

Cracking and soaking

- Always crack (break your bulbs into individual cloves) the day of planting - not before.
- Use only the medium, large and extra large cloves for planting. Use the rest in your kitchen or for green garlic.
- Soak your cloves for 3 minutes in hospital grade bleach solution. If shoots or roots are visible - dilute bleach to 1 in 3 parts of water and soak for 3 minutes. We have upgraded our pre-soak recommendation from Vodka to bleach because of the many new bacterial and fungal diseases that have appeared in the last few seasons.
- Drain the cloves and rinse to remove the bleach. This will sterilise the external surface of the clove skin and root zone but will not cure any internal disease.

Planting, mulching and microbing

- Plant your cloves deep in the soil so they have between 2-3cm of topsoil over the top of the clove tip.
- Apply a 3cm layer of cane sugar mulch immediately.
- Water beds to moisten the soil to aid germination.
- Three days after planting, apply a solution of Seasol and a treatment of our Facultative Anaerobic Microbes and Biocontrols.
- Your garlic will develop roots first and then produce leaves - so don't worry if leaves don't appear immediately.
- Early harvesting garlic will produce visible leaves within 4 days to 2 weeks, but mid and late season garlic groups may take up to 6 weeks as they need cold soil temperatures to trigger leaf shooting.
- If you are worried, carefully remove the soil to check the roots. If they have emerged - all is good.

**FREE
ENTRY!**

Preston Garden Club presents

**Saturday,
22 April 2023,
11am to 3pm**

GARDEN GALA



Darebin North West Uniting Church Hall
399a Murray Road, Preston



Nelson
Alexander

#More Than
Real Estate



Join us for this fun family event including garden and plant stalls, children's activities, food and drink at the Darebin North West Uniting Church Hall!

- Plants & Seedlings
- Preserves
- Bonsai & Herbs
- Garden talks & Demonstrations
- Drewitt's Bulbs
- Garden Tools

***Sausage
sizzle***

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