



# Bundaberg Organic Gardeners

~working with nature~

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## NEWSLETTER MAY 2022

**Hello and welcome to our May Newsletter.**

There has certainly been a lot happening in our little gardening community over the last month. Thank you to everyone who contributes to this newsletter, it makes for more interesting reading and learning for us all.

The **Taste Bundaberg Festival Farmers Market** will be held on Saturday August 6<sup>th</sup>. BOGI will have a large stall again this year. Marlene Kent, our Vice-President, is the coordinator and eager to get organised. We need volunteers for a sub-committee who will be tasked with distributing seeds, and asking members what they will plant for giving away at the event.

We are in need of a **Seed Saving Co-Ordinator** for the club, to organise and enable access to the huge variety of seeds our members produce. Please volunteer for this important job.

**Our Supper Roster is BACK!** Please let Pam Biden know if you cannot bring something. Please list ingredients to assist those with allergies and intolerances, and share recipes where you can. Please also be mindful of Covid when sharing food.

### CLUB MEETING –

**always the last Tuesday of the Month.**

**Tuesday 31st May 2022**

**Time:** Doors open **6.00 pm** for a **6.30 pm** start

**Guest Speaker:** Mark and Jess from Bundaberg Ferments.

**Venue:** McNaught Hall (Uniting Church Hall)  
Corner Barolin and Electra Street, Bundaberg  
Attendance \$3-member, \$5 visitor, Tea Coffee avail,  
Members please be reminded to wear your badges to the meeting

**Get your lucky door ticket (free with entry), bring along produce to show on the 'From My Garden' table and share in the free seedlings at the end of the meeting.**

*This Month's Supper Roster*

*Michael Apap ~ Chris Jeffrey*

*Pam Biden ~ Peter Van Beek*

*Julie Bury ~ Sarah Park*

*Linda Cameron ~ Cathy Critchlow*

*Kay De Gunst ~ Lenzie Duffy*

## Management Committee News:

The club has put in an application to be involved in **Taste Bundaberg Festival** (Taste Farmers Market) to be held at the Bundaberg Recreational Precinct on Saturday 6 August from 7am to 2pm. The Council is keen for us to be involved and will be supplying us with a marquee as well as tables and more for our display.

Marlene, *our Vice President*, is asking for volunteers to be in a sub-committee to help design the layout etc for our site and make our display even better than the previous market. We would like to set up our area a certain way, to enhance our produce. Please contact Marlene on 0402216188 or [kmarlene26@yahoo.com](mailto:kmarlene26@yahoo.com)

*We need volunteers* to help organise, set-up and *pull-down* our displays, *be on hand to give-away seedlings*, and demonstrate and educate the public about what organic growing is all about. Will you please help?

For our displays and give-aways, we will need to be planting our seeds 6 to 8 weeks before the event, roughly around 25 June for most plants so they will be ready by 6<sup>th</sup> August. Please bring along suitable seeds to share and if you need seeds, please get yours at the *May or at the latest, the June BOGI Meeting*.

The committee reviewed safety and insurance issues for garden and other visits. There will now be a safety list attached to the sign in sheet which members need to read to ensure there are no issues for your particular safety situation.

### Treasurer Report until 30th April, 2022:

Opening balance	\$4409.59
Income	322.00
Expenditure	169.20
Closing balance	\$4562.39

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## Planting by the Moon – June

(1/2 moon to Full Moon) 8 – 14 June: Increased light from the waxing moon benefits leaf growth, and root growth slows down. Best time to sow or transplant fruiting annuals.

(Full moon to ½ Moon) 14 – 20 June: Gravitational pull decreases and moonlight decreases, so leaf growth reduces and root growth increases. Plant root crops now (below ground).

(1/2 moon to New Moon) 21 – 28 June: The waning moon is good for balanced growth. No sowing or planting during this phase. *Harvest vegetables, weeding, digging, pruning and cultivate. Apply mulch.*

(New Moon to ½ Moon) 29 – 6 July: Influences balanced growth; a lower gravitational pull decreases and this stimulates root growth. The best time to sow or transplant leafy vegetables.

## What to plant in June

Asian vegetables; Beans; Beetroot; Broad Beans; Cabbage; Carrots; Cauliflower; Garlic; Kohlrabi; Leeks; Lettuce; Mustard Greens; Onions; Parsnips; Peas; Potatoes; Radish; Shallots; Silverbeet; Spinach; Sweet Potatoes; Turnips.

Plant these in seedling trays first: Broccoli; Cabbage; Capsicum; Cauliflower; Celery; Lettuce; Silverbeet, Tomatoes.

# Can you grow a few herbs in a pot for display at the Taste Bundaberg Festival?



The guest speaker for the April meeting was Reisha Terene whose topic was: Vegan Permaculture: Taking permaculture to the next level.

Reisha's foray into permaculture came before her conversion to becoming an ethical vegan which was inspired by a documentary she watched. She has eaten a vegan diet for over nine years.

When she first began practising permaculture, she obtained lots of chooks. Then after changing her thinking and diet, she transitioned her fowls from egg producers to sanctuary chickens.

(Originally fowl, in the wild, would only lay one or two clutches of eggs per year. Now, as a result of selective breeding, they now lay between 200 and 300 eggs a year. The medical issues that are caused by the extra stress of constantly laying eggs, are significant. )

Reisha decided to move toward a different form of permaculture that uses no confined animals or animal byproducts. The results just take a little longer.

All labour in her permaculture garden is provided by herself rather than using animals, as is the norm, for traditional permaculture farming. All wildlife is encouraged on her urban block and she intentionally creates a variety of habitats to cater for them.

Reisha believes that excluding confined animals increases the amount of space available for growing, increases diversity and reduces the cost of inputs e.g. vet bills or providing animal shelters.

Instead of using animal manures for garden amendments, Reisha uses green manures which she believes can provide most of the nutrients that would be provided by manures. Many plants are also used as living mulch e.g. Pinto Peanut and sweet potato.

Green manures serve a multitude of purposes and much information can be gleaned from the Green Harvest website on this topic.

Her compost is made on site from wood chip and grasses, namely lemongrass and vetiver.



Wood chip (a mix of approximately four different trees species from Bundy Mulch and Chip) is spread thickly on pathways between gardens, left for a year to decompose, then spread on the adjacent gardens as a compost. Woodchip is virtually the only resource that Reisha imports into her permaculture system.

Reisha prefers forest-type gardens and she uses wicking beds for intensive growing. This engaging presentation included a slide show and was a very information and interesting segment of our BOGI April meeting.

Thanks Reisha!

## Upcoming Garden Visit to Cat Wilson at Gaeta. Saturday 4 June.

Catherine has several acres, about 90 minutes from Bundaberg, behind Mount Perry, and would like some ideas how to develop the gardens and animals and trees etc. We are having a planning or ideas day.

We will car pool and travel in convoy from Bundaberg, meeting others along the way. We will gather at the Botanic Gardens and leave Bundaberg at 8.15 on Saturday 4 June. We aim to arrive at Catherine's about 10 am.

After a quick garden walk, we will share ideas and plans before lunch. Bring your own lunch. Drinks will be provided. This is in the sticks. A mud map will be supplied. Please note there is NO phone reception and GPS will not work where we are going.

A word from Cat. "I will provide a mud-map of the site along with paper for the commentary, but everyone will need to bring their own clipboard or similar to lean on as they walk around. The purpose of the event is for the experienced gardeners in the club to pass on their knowledge to fledglings like myself, when it is most needed, at the start of my gardening journey. Positive criticism of current garden and suggestions for new ideas are all welcome and I will not take offence to any commentary.

Some housekeeping (or warnings?!):

Hats or jackets recommended. It can be very hot or very cold out here. Closed-in farm-like footwear must be worn as we have a wonderful abundance in snake and spider life. Wonbah Road is mostly dirt and is currently very corrugated, and our driveway is mildly step - 4WDs are recommended. Care should be taken with all grids and dips as they do not have a comfortable transition with the road surface. And finally, there are several hundred cows that are grazed over the road after the first grid and they can be flighty with vehicles or just plain stubborn when comfortably seated in the middle of the road."

Please place your name on the Workshop List at the May meeting or contact Trevor should you wish to attend.

## Club outing Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022



Our planned events for outings seem to be an -"Will it be okay, or should we cancel???" decision of late, due to weather and the dreaded C-D. Nevertheless, our Sunday group of risk adventurers took the spirit of learning a new technique for growing tomatoes seriously, and the end result was very good. We met at Bargara Berries (Hoods Road) early afternoon, and were able to select healthy seedlings from a range of vegetables, fruit and flowers - at very reasonable prices, with the assistance of our owner hosts. We also fit in a quick tour of how they produce seedlings in mass to keep our farmers busily growing to full market size in no time!

We then set off then to the farm of Matt and Sally Cathcart at South Kolan where, by that time, we enjoyed a sit down and chat with home healthy home cooked goodies, thanks to Deltry. (Check a recipe in this letter!) Matt was on his own this Mothers Day Sunday, but generously gave us his time to demonstrate how to grow tomatoes by trellising. We also received some cuttings to get started with a particular tomato variety. We experimented with the tying up method (as above to keep them tall and prospering. The farm produces many vegetable seedlings annually, and is certainly a challenge for Matt and Sally. They are also kept busy with their colourful birds, goats and active pigs. It was a great afternoon, and when the rain descended, we quickly left them and headed home. Thank you Matt and Sally.

## Community News.

If you watch the news, listen to the radio or read the paper, you will probably have heard the seriousness of families and individuals in our community who are struggling with housing, and high rental / cost of living expenses and so on. There are a number of community organisations out there who are preparing meals and essentials packs to help these people. I have been in contact with Angels Community Group, who are located at 66 Targo Street (The old bus terminal). They are grateful for any food donations that are then distributed for free at their Angels Mini Mart or through their Support Centre. You can take food directly to them during business hours, or contact them for more information on 41536894.

This idea to highlight this charity was prompted when Lenzie made contact as he had too many bananas ripening at once, that couldn't wait to be shared at the next meeting. I gladly collected them from him and shared with the Bundaberg East State School Robotics team. The team meets after school has finished for the day. What a wonderful way to feed so many hungry, active, bubbly children.



I saw this little tool online in a cooking group, and forwarded the idea to my dad.

Later that day he'd made a few to share and they work a treat. All you need is to find your local plumber for a few copper offcuts, and a friend who drinks champagne.

This is what we now use to separate the petal from the seed pod in Rosella flowers.  
(Cathy)

Thanks to all club members who supported Olive in her fundraising efforts. This is what we received back from Northey Street City Farm and what they had in their own newsletter.



### Thank you to all our donors

A very special thank you goes to Olive.

When Olive (6) saw first hand the flood damage in Brisbane, she suggested to the family that they raise money to help those affected. Her family are keen organic gardeners in Bundaberg and thought Northey Street City Farm would be a great organisation to donate to.

Olive has been saving money herself as well as asking for donations and has raised \$100.

Needless to say that we are immensely grateful to each and every one of you who have contributed to our Flood Relief Campaign.

## Member Contributions

As a follow-on from our discussion at the April Meeting, I sourced some information about mistletoe. (Maureen)

### MISTLETOE: FRIEND OR FOE?

The plant can get a bad rap due to its parasitic nature. Mistletoes are partly parasitic – producing its own energy through photosynthesis but obtaining nutrients and water from the host plant.

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They have co-evolved with the native flora on which they establish, with hosts including Eucalyptus and Acacia among others. Mistletoe plays an important ecological function, and is sometimes considered to be important to the health of an ecosystem, providing food and shelter for wildlife.

The flowers produce nectar that is consumed by birds and invertebrates. In addition, all species produce small sticky fruits that are eaten by the Mistletoe Bird (*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*) and the Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater (*Acanthagenys rufogularis*).

As consumer of the fruit, the Mistletoe Bird is dependent on this plant for its survival but in turn acts as a seed disperser for the plant, excreting the sticky seed that then sticks to the cloacal plumage. In frustration, the bird wipes its back end onto a branch and the sticky seed dislodges and sticks to the bark.

Mistletoe uses the host tree to source water and nutrients, and this can in turn kill off the portion of the limb past the site of Mistletoe attachment, in turn opening up a section of the canopy for the Mistletoe to access sunlight. As a result, some landholders may take the view that Mistletoe is a threat to trees and may attempt to remove the clumps or affected branches.

Mistletoe is very rarely responsible for the direct decline in tree health, but rather acts as an indicator of already poor health or an unbalanced ecosystem. Healthy trees are often able to cope readily with a small infestation, while trees that are heavily infested with Mistletoe are often already old, stressed or otherwise compromised. Stressors include poor soil nutrient levels, soil compaction, salinity, vegetation clearance and tree isolation, altered water supply, fungal attack and insect predation.

If Mistletoe removal is needed, this can be done by removing the limb that contains the parasite. Cutting off tree limbs in this case can be more damaging than leaving the Mistletoe in place, especially true considering the rapid reinfection that can take place. In many cases, it's best to leave the Mistletoe to perform a valuable function in the ecosystem. Focusing attention on improving tree health may be a better use of energy.

(Article sourced from Land for Wildlife & Garden for Wildlife Central Australia - Hosted by Low Ecological Services P/L)



Check out this great Turmeric harvest from Les and Kay de Gunst garden. Kay says this is just some of their harvest, and that it stores well in coolite (Styrofoam) boxes for future use.

## Organic is not enough. Regenerative agriculture/farming/gardening is a better way.

“Regeneration International describes regenerative agriculture as farming and grazing practices that, among other benefits, reverse climate change by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity – resulting in both carbon drawdown and improving the water cycle. Specifically, Regenerative agriculture is a holistic land management practice that leverages the power of photosynthesis in plants to close the carbon cycle and build soil health, crop resilience and nutrient density.

Regenerative agriculture improves soil health, primarily through the practices that increase soil organic matter. This not only aids in increasing soil biota diversity and health, but increases biodiversity both above and below the soil surface, while increasing both water holding capacity and sequestering carbon at greater depths, thus drawing down climate-damaging levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, and improving soil structure to reverse civilization-threatening human-caused soil loss. Research continues to reveal the damaging effects to the soil from tillage, applications of agricultural chemicals and salt-based fertilizers, and carbon mining. Regenerative Agriculture reverses this paradigm to build for the future.”

<https://www.earthday.org/campaign/regenerative-agriculture/>

“Key Techniques include:

- Conservation tillage: Plowing and tillage dramatically erode soil and release large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. They also can result in the kind of bare or compacted soil that creates a hostile environment for important soil microbes. By adopting low- or no-till practices, farmers minimize physical disturbance of the soil, and over time increase levels of soil organic matter, creating healthier, more resilient environments for plants to thrive, as well as keeping more and more carbon where it belongs.
- Diversity: Different plants release different carbohydrates (sugars) through their roots, and various microbes feed on these carbs and return all sorts of different nutrients back to the plant and the soil. By increasing the plant diversity of their fields, farmers help create the rich, varied, and nutrient-dense soils that lead to more productive yields.
- Rotation and cover crops: Left exposed to the elements, soil will erode and the nutrients necessary for successful plant growth will either dry out or quite literally wash away. At the same time, planting the same plants in the same location can lead to a buildup of some nutrients and a lack of others. But by rotating crops and deploying cover crops strategically, farms and gardens can infuse soils with more and more (and more diverse) soil organic matter, often while avoiding disease and pest problems naturally. Always remember, bare soil is bad soil.
- Mess with it less: In addition to minimizing physical disturbance, regenerative agriculture practitioners also often seek to be cautious about chemical or biological activities that also can damage long-term soil health. Misapplication of fertilizers and other soil amendments can disrupt the natural relationship between microorganisms and plant roots.



**The overriding theme:  
If you take care of your soil, it will take care of you.”**

<https://www.climaterealityproject.org/blog/what-regenerative-agriculture>

# Organic gardeners focus on benefits of great produce

By Angela Norval

What started out as a simple idea in 2004, based on a similar successful club in Childers, the Bundaberg Organic Gardeners Inc (BOGI) has continued to grow in popularity and welcomes new members.

There continues to be an educational component to the club, especially given the original meeting at a shelter shed in the rainforest area at the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens had curator of the gardens Jim Randall give a talk on the organic components in the gardens.

Shortly afterwards, a meeting place was found under the grandstand at the Across the Waves Sports Club which served well until the club moved to its present location at the Uniting Church in Electra Street.

The club became incorporated in January 2008 and members continue to work well to keep the club strong.

Through following an organic lifestyle, members of BOGI have a more active and healthier lifestyle by maximising the health quality of their food, while also being economical and having the satisfaction of knowing they are following gardening practices that go back thousands of years up until recent times.

Asked what was involved in organic gardening, club secretary Karyn Ennor said first they had to be a desire to learn the benefits of home-grown fruits and vegetables; such as the fact that cucumbers grown in the home garden last much longer than store bought.

"Growing organically is growing without the use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers, using open-pollinated seed and free from genetic engineering.

"Organic gardening is working with nature, using the natural resources of soil, air,



Joy Millet (right), Maureen Schmitt (president), and Mariene Kent (committee Member) represent the club at the Taste Bundaberg Festival.

water and the return of animal and plant waste to create healthy soil.

"Plants grown in healthy soil are healthy and resistant to pests and diseases.

"Organic gardening involves putting life and energy into the soil and encourages the plant to send more sugars from the roots to feed soil life.

"This increases soil carbon and availability of water and nutrients to the plant and this life and energy is necessary to give protection from diseases and insects.

"The eating flavour and nutrition of organic fruit and vegetables is also high; this is how nature works."

The Bundaberg Organic Gardeners Club Inc highlight that for organic gardening a minimal space is all that's needed to grow enough to feed an average family.

With the use of raised beds, and exclusion

netting the job is made much easier.

"Gardening is one of life's great mysteries and Mother Nature holds all the cards: so, working with nature is a good place to start.

"Apart from climatic conditions, the most important controlling factor to your gardening success, is your soil.

"In an organic garden, there are no chemical pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, artificial fertilizers or genetically modified materials.

"It is difficult to achieve the 100 per cent organic garden.

"However, by not using chemicals is 100 per cent better for the food you grow and for the environment and you and your family will reap the benefits."

BOGI provides a good mix of people with a common interest and meets monthly on the last Tuesday of the month, while also a



One of the club's weekend working bee preparing wicking beds for planting on a member's property.

publication of a monthly newsletter keeps members up to date with coming events like member garden visits, trips away to visit garden shows, community and gardens of interest and education, topical information, references and reports on monthly guest speakers.

Each month they also have a seedling giveaway which encourages members to grow seedlings from seeds swapped, and then give away excess seedlings.

This provides a great diversity of knowledge of lesser-known true varieties and a spirit of adventure to try something new.

"Our club supports research into better organic methods, providing people with information about how to garden organically and advise on the benefits both to people and the environment of organically grown produce.

"We have also provided information to school community gardens and reached the general community through The Taste of Bundy Festival."

Visitors are welcome to join a meeting or workshop and to find out more email secretary.bundyorgard@gmail.com

## Delicious recipe submitted by Deltry

### Lemon and Currant bars

#### INGREDIENTS

- 100g raw macadamias or blanched hazelnuts
- zest of 1 organic lemon or 2 drops pure essential oil
- 1/2 tsp vanilla powder or vanilla paste
- 70g rice syrup or barley malt\*
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- 120g coconut oil (or extra virgin olive oil)
- 180g almond meal
- 20g coconut flour
- 1/2 tsp bicarb soda
- 1/4 tsp fine sea salt
- 100g currants

\* This recipe is adapted from Quirky Cooking – Jo Whitton. It could be adapted to using a processor. I only use rice syrup as it contains no fructose. Jo uses honey or maple syrup or a sweetener of your choice.

### Thermomix Method

Preheat oven to 180C. Line a 20x30cm baking dish with baking paper.

Place nuts onto a baking tray and cook for 10-15 mins, or until lightly browned. Roughly chop by hand. Set aside. Place lemon zest into TM bowl and chop 1 min/speed 9, or zest lemon with a microplane or fine grater.

Add remaining ingredients except nuts and currants, and mix 10 sec/speed 6.

Add macadamias and currants and mix 5 sec/reverse/speed 3.

Press dough into the lined baking dish, and bake in 180C oven for 15-20 mins, or until golden brown and cooked through.

Cool, then place into freezer to chill. Once chilled cut into 2x10cm bars, and wrap in baking paper if desired. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to a week, or in the freezer for up to 2 months.

**President – Maureen Schmitt**

**Vice President – Marlene Kent**

**Treasurer – Kay De Gunst**

**Secretary – Karyn Ennor**

**Committee Members are Trevor Galletly, Christine Jeffery, Joan Smart and Pam Biden.**

**Herbal Teas – Julie Burry**

**Library – Joy Millet**

**Supper – Pam Biden**

**Workshops and Field Trips – Trevor Galletly**

**BOGI Shop – Bruce McKay**

**Newsletter Editor– Cathy Critchlow**

**Assistant Editor – Donna Watton**

**Deadline for May Newsletter.**

**Please send through information to the editor by the second Friday of each month.**

We would love FEEDBACK from club members on anything and everything.

**Tell us about your successes and your failures in the garden and help others learn along the way.**

Let us know about community events or what's up and coming in the area.

To include notices and details of Club activities

email: [newsletter.bundyorgard@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.bundyorgard@gmail.com)

Or Phone Cathy 0403 430 969

**BOGI SHOP**

Products available are:

- Liquid Lime
- Liquid Kelp
- Liquid Fish
- Mineral Granules
- Microlife
- Organibor and
- Katex Organic Super Growth.

They are available for sale at our meetings, but please contact

Bruce McKay on 41544405 for collection from his address in Walkervale.

**This is the official monthly newsletter published by and distributed to the members of Bundaberg Organic Gardeners Inc. Whilst every effort is made to publish accurate information, the Club accepts no responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed, or any consequence arising from them. For further information, contact the Secretary.**