

Community Garden Project GREEN PZ MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

June 2009/1

“Get Growing in Kawerau”

Dear Friends of Green Pz (pronounced peas!)

Welcome to our first inaugural, **“Get Growing in Kawerau”** Monthly Newsletter to support growing healthy food in our community. It is hoped this will be an evolving calendar to meet the growing needs of the community. This month will be a bit of a “suck it and see” type of thing, limited by time constraints and the desire to get our first calendar circulated early in June. It is hoped information will be gleaned from a variety of sources with contributions coming mainly from you: **Yes....you....our gardening or wanna-be gardening community.** Please don't be shy. There is no one that knows our conditions and needs better than the locals and your tips and contributions are welcomed and encouraged. Together, we can help each other to grow healthy food for our friends, family and wider community.

What to Plant and Sow.

A number of people have asked the question, “What can we plant now”? There is a limited range of vegetables that can be planted and that you can have success with at this time of year without a lot of extra inputs. It is not just the colder conditions that brings this about, but also the shortening daylight hours. The 21st June is the shortest day, after which things will slowly improve. Seeds are more difficult to germinate in cold, wet soils, and seedlings planted out of types that are not suited to the local environment, will make little growth over the next couple of months.

Getting a good strike in cold soil can be difficult, but is improved by soaking the seeds in warm water with a little **vermicast or seaweed solution** added, or by putting seed trays put in a heated room, or the hot water cupboard until the first signs of germination.

Sow direct

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| • Spinach | Broad beans |
| • Peas | Snow Peas |
| • Garlic | Tree onions |
| • Shallots | Other onions grown from bulbs |
| • Statice | Sweet peas |



Plant

Brassica seedlings, including cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, also, Silver beet, Winter spinach, calendulas, foxgloves and forget-me-nots.

- Cut down asparagus ferns; mulch or compost the beds.
- Put some rosemary cuttings in water on the windowsill. Once roots have formed, plant into small pots for planting in late spring.
- As deciduous trees drop their leaves, you may wish to spray with a mineral oil if mites, scale, or woolly aphids have been a problem over the growing season. These insects over-winter on the flaky bark and buds so this will give them a suffocating fright.
- Vegetable and flower plants may benefit from a side dressing of blood and bone and/or the application of fish fertilizer or compost tea.

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PH testing

June is a good time to test soil pH. If your soil pH is not at optimal levels, this can have a detrimental effect of the growth of plants throughout the year. I have recently bought a pH metre and if you want to be a part of my learning experience and have your vegetable garden soil pH tested just let me know. Correction may be as simple as adding some garden lime. We can learn together.

June Moon Calendar

This is another learning experience for me and I thought I would share it with you. It is generally well accepted that the phases of the moon impact on the gardening calendar. This is a bit of a go at introducing the phases of the moon for the month and what could be done on various days to work with the phases for optimal growth. This is a compilation from various sources including Koanga Garden Guide – A complete Guide to Gardening Organically and Sustainably by Kay Baxter and, a website www.2-women-on-2-acres.com **If you have some experience with this aspect of gardening I would welcome your support with this part of the calendar.**

Phases of the Moon

- New Moon – 22 June
Plan next years garden
Foliar spray
Consider copper spray on stone fruit trees to fix leaf curl and bacterial problems if these have caused concern.
- First quarter – 29 June
Prune and plant fruit trees
- Full Moon – Sunday 8 June - Growth period commences
Feed two days before and 2 days after full moon
Plant garlic 3 days after full moon also tree onions shallots and onions
Scatter neem granules around roots of trees that are susceptible to woolly aphids
Plant and prune fruit trees
Manure and prune feijoas. These are pollinated by birds so need to be pruned from inside to be open
- Last quarter – 16 June
Plant and prune fruit trees including feijoas
Prune, lime and manure and mulch berry fruit,
De sucker raspberries



Best Sowing/Pruning days: 9th, 10th, 11th, 14th, 15th, 24th, and 30th June

Best harvest days: 12th and 13th June

Best weeding days: 17th, 18th, 21st and 22nd June

What's Happening in my Patch! *Well I thought I would kick this off.*

I am hoping others will offer to do a couple of paragraphs for us in coming months and tell us about what is happening in their patch.

As I look out the window, I am pondering a green crop which is just starting to flower in one of my new, slightly raised vegetable gardens. I am in my "soil improvement phase" and have planted several green crops to improve the soil and add a much needed carbon source to our typical Kawerau volcanic ash soil low in organic matter. I am just waiting for a few more plants to reach the flowering stage before cutting it down and incorporating the crop back into the soil. I bought a seed mix from the Koanga Gardens and am

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hoping for great things. This will be my tomato garden for next season as it includes mustard which is said to help clean the soil.

I have a variety of piles of waste from the Kawerau Pure Foods Olive Grove which is pressing olives to make olive oil right in Ranfurly Court as I write. A fabulous food forest in our own community. More about this in future calendars. I am trialing using the olive waste from the olive oil processing as garden mulch, compost component and as a food source for worms. I am rather hoping the olive stones don't choke the little wormies or make them any more slippery than they already are! No complaints to date.

Thank goodness the pesky white butterflies seem to have surrendered to the cooler weather. What a bother they have been but, I'm hoping as my soil improves I will discourage these disruptive pests particularly when I read about the fabulous benefits of eating brassicas which they take great joy in munching on. I am hoping to give my veges a dose of liquid fertilizer (my own seething microbial brew processed in the laundry tub much to the objection of my teenage daughter) just before and after the full moon. I am also hoping to do a quick push hoe around the veges to allow the air to circulate and break up the crusty bit on the top of the soil and hopefully take care of the weeds before they get too big..(I am glad that you can't actually see the size of the weeds at the moment. A quick weed in reality is more like a major scything operation at my house, but I'm sure your gardens are far more under control than my wilderness!) Well that's my plan anyway. Yeah right!

Seeds

Does anyone have any spare seeds to donate or exchange?? Please let me know and we will start setting up our very own seed bank to share.

Kawerau Garden Club Tip of the month

The Kawerau Garden Club is a wonderful active gardening group in the community who meet monthly. Together they have many years of experience to share. New members are welcome.

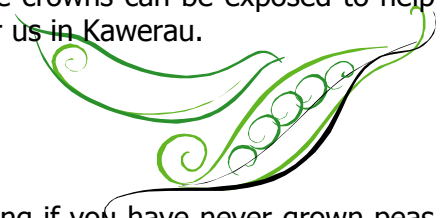
Plant garlic and shallots on or around the shortest day of the month. Shallots should be planted so they are just poking above the soil. As they approach maturity in the summer time crowns can be exposed to help ripen and size them up. This is a well known adage and seems to work for us in Kawerau.

Food crop of the month

It seems fitting to start with **Peas**

Peas are good to grow at the moment. Here is a method worth considering if you have never grown peas in this way. Dig a trench 100mm deep. Mow your lawn and take the fresh clippings and place them into trench filling to about 20mm from the top. Cover clippings with 10mm soil and sprinkle with lime and other food such as sheep manure and, or blood and bone. Lightly cover with soil or compost and place the seeds along the trench. Cover with soil and compost, water in with a liquid food if available. Many varieties require some support so you can make some wigwam types of structures along the row with bits of twigs if you like. The heat from the decomposing grass will warm the soil above and speed germination. Peas may get powdery mildew so this can be controlled with a solution of 1 or 2 tablespoons of baking soda dissolved in a litre of warm water. Spray foliage for complete coverage and repeat as needed. Also, a small drip of dishwashing detergent could be added.

Well fellow gardeners, the solstice is nearly upon us so, we have an excuse to spend time plotting, scheming planning and reading seed catalogues. If you have seed catalogues you are prepared to share, let me know and we can arrange for these to be circulated among others.



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What's Happening!

29th May – 1st June

7th June

10-13 June

Permaculture National Hui – Te Teko

Preschool Mataariki Celebration – contact Tuwharetoa Hauora

Mystery Creek Field Days, Hamilton

My Land our Environment

www.fielddays.co.nz

21st June

Winter Solstice (Shortest Day)

27th June – 10.00 am

Trees for Babies at the Monika Lanham Reserve

Every family of babies born in the Kawerau community in the last year can plant a tree supplied by the Kawerau District Council at a special ceremony at the Reserve. Contact the Council for further information.

Please consider adding something for the July Calendar. Your feedback and contributions are encouraged and welcomed.

This Newsletter will be available on the www.kea.org.nz website. Let us know if you would like to subscribe to this so we can add you to the emailing list. If you are not on email, let us have your postal address.

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or talk to our other Green PZ members: Phyllis at REAP; Lisa at the Hauora; Lyn at KPHO; Fleur at Maori Womens' Welfare league; John Dixon at Buildtec; Alistair Holmes at GreyPower, Ali at Kawerau Youth Council.

