

GREEN PZ NEWSLETTER

September 2010 | Issue 10



Hello Friends of the Kawerau Community Gardens Project(KCGP)

Goodness, we're tearing into September already! So much has happened it's hard to know where to start. Involvement of local groups and new volunteers has meant that many of the hard yards have been covered and the project is moving steadily forward.

The nursery...

Has filled up nicely. One glasshouse and both shade houses are full. They have been keeping the garden at the House of Hope supplied as we continue to manage a pick for the Food Bank through these cooler months.

The nursery tomato beds were replaced with rows of cabbage, broccoli, butter crunch lettuce, miners lettuce, bok choi (we've discovered the flowers are yummy!), mangle beet, spring onions, garlic, curly kale, broad beans and silver beet. They're providing the first few salads already. About to go in are sweet peas (who can resist, all that colour and scent plus they're good for the soil), and we have potted up donated raspberries, strawberries, tulips, and perennial forget me not. I'm delighted to say we have some wonderful new volunteers who have been invaluable in making things move ahead in the last month. What a difference extra hands make! They learnt how to take cuttings and tackled the painstaking job of pricking out. Not so fascinating was washing the punnets for re-use...

Among them we have discovered a valuable new team member Mere Kahika who brings with her skills of establishing record keeping and designing spreadsheets and databases to track the plants from seed, through the nursery to garden and harvest. Wow. I'm impressed. ...and she's just getting warmed up! Welcome Mere!

The Build Tech team has constructed two worm farms from old bathtubs. We have one at the nursery and the other has been delivered to Tracy so she can help us explore worm-farming techniques - in her spare time of course!

The Te Huinga Trust has done a terrific clean up job to make space for the bagged natives. They are out of the shade house growing well in the sunshine and frost and will be strong for an autumn planting in Monica Lanham Reserve. Hundreds more have been pricked and they fill



The Nursery

one side of the second shade house. We'll need to have a huge bagging session in a couple of months. (That was a preparatory hint folks... details closer to the time...)

Work is nearly finished on the second glass house with the benches having their beautiful old rotten lichen covered planks replaced with new timber that will actually hold plants. Many thanks to Chris Hansen for his fabulous craftsmanship in 'knocking up' seedling benches that ain't gonna fall down.

The place looks fabulous with a variety of hanging baskets that were hung in Jellicoe Court during Woodfest. Many thanks to Duncan Clarke and Ron Campbell for making it happen.

We grew some seedlings and a variety of food plants for the Garden Club stall over the Woodfest weekend. The weather didn't daunt our spirits and another successful stall was held. Many thanks to the Garden Club for making room for us.

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Hints for the Month of September:

Sow and Plant:

Kitchen Garden:

- Complete vegetable preparation, digging in plenty of compost.
- Sow seeds of carrots, parsnip, beetroot, silverbeet, peas, swede and turnips directly into the soil.
- Sow lettuces, leeks, cabbage, tomato, capsicum, courgette, cucumber and eggplant ready for transplanting later. *-Remember people, the glasshouse is available for you to use to get the head start on the season for your own gardens.*
- Transplant summer vege seedlings into the garden; lettuce, leeks, cabbage, onions and silverbeet.
- Spray with copper to protect young seedlings from fungus diseases.
- Protect seedlings from slugs and snails. *- Quash is one of the safer products, another way is to throw a party for them and place beer traps through their neighbourhood.*
- Plant early-crop potatoes after sprouting.
- Plant herbs in pots or into the garden and sow herb seeds for summer harvest.
- Plant citrus and fruit trees. Feed existing trees.
- Prune Passionfruit vines and Feijoas to encourage new growth and fruiting - late September to early October, especially in colder climates.
- Spray stone fruit trees with copper to protect from leaf curl disease

Flowers:

- Sow seeds of Ageratum, Alyssum, Aster, Begonia, Chrysanthemum, Californian Poppy, Carnation, Celosia, Coleus, Cosmos, Dahlia, Dianthus, Everlasting Daisy, Gazania, Geranium, Gerbera, Godetia, Gypsophila, Honesty, Impatiens, Marigold, Petunia, Nasturtium, Phlox, Salvia, Snapdragon, Statice, Sunflower, Sweetpea, Verbena, Viscaria and Wallflower. Using a good seed raising mix can improve results.
- Plant seedlings of spring and summer flowering annuals including Alyssum, Begonia, Cosmos, Calendula, Chrysanthemum, Delphinium, Forget-me-

not, Gypsophila, Hollyhock, Salvia, Lobelia, Marigold, Nemesia, Polyanthus, Primula, Pansies, Snapdragon, Statice, Sweetpea and Wallflower.

- Protect young seedlings from slugs and snails.
- Prolong the blooming of early spring flowers such as Cineraria, Pansies, Poppies and Primulas by liquid feeding and removing faded blooms.
- Plant Dahlia tubers and Gladioli corms.
- Plant new perennials, taking care with tender plants in cold districts until danger of frost is over.
- Feed spring flowering bulbs with bulb food to ensure best flowering for next year.
- Protect roses from pests and diseases.



Trees

- Feed and mulch roses, trees and shrubs.
- Plant trees and shrubs. A good time to choose new Camellias and Rhododendrons as they come into flower.
- Complete pruning of Fuchsias.
- Repot and feed houseplants.
- Plant hanging baskets and terracotta pots for summer display.

Lawns

- Sow new lawns. Select the seed type that would be most suitable for your conditions.
- Feed existing lawns. Water-in well.
- Spray Onehunga weed to eliminate prickles in summer. *-Last year I had so many trees to water the lawn stayed green all summer and it didn't get too prickly...*
- Control broadleaf weeds. *-I dug mine up over time. It didn't take that long really, considering it was just a pottering job while having a cuppa and a yarn.*

Community Gardens

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We're on the Web!
See us at: www.kea.org.nz

Food Crop of the Month

Kale

Is a ruffled-leafed green vegetable that is a member of the cabbage family. With leaves that range in color from dark green to purple, kale is commonly used as a garnish for food presentation or as a cooked vegetable. The vegetable most often referred to as Kale has dark green leaves and can be eaten fresh or cooked as a side dish, providing a cabbage like taste. The stalks, which are generally tough, are usually discarded if they are more than 1/8 inch thick and only the leaf is eaten. Kale is also known as Borecole, Cow Cabbage or Kail.

Kale is absolutely rich and abundant in calcium, lutein, iron, and Vitamins A, C, and K. Kale has seven times the beta-carotene of broccoli and ten times more lutein. Kale is rich in Vitamin C and fibre. The "Icing on the Kale" are the natural occurring all important phytochemicals sulforaphane and indoles which research suggests may protect against cancer and antioxidant Vitamin E.

Because of the frilly appearance of the leaves, all varieties of Kale can be used as a garnish to decorate food dishes and platters. However, Purple Kale is particularly decorative, due to the red and green colors in the leaves but it is not edible.

It has become clear that Kale, curly or otherwise is a tasty and reliable winter green, providing visual entertainment and multiple florets that have a unique flavour all of their own. The florets and leaves are grazed raw by our garden helpers and the leaves (discard stems) taste quite like silverbeet when cooked and can be stir fried, steamed or stewed, just like silverbeet. To my surprise, in our garden, this year, it out performed the ever-reliable silverbeet!



*Kale at the
Community
Garden*

Recipe of the Month

Kale and Sausage Stew

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 pound spicy smoked sausage, such as kielbasa, Polish, andouille, etc; sliced
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, or more to taste, chopped
1 pound kale
1 cup water or broth
1/2 cup red wine (substitute water or broth)
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 pinch cayenne pepper
1 pound potatoes cut into 1 to 1 1/2" chunks, or whole if small
Salt if needed

1. Heat oil in large frypan or saucepan and cook sausage (medium heat) until it begins to brown, about 5 minutes. Spoon off all but about 1 tablespoon of fat and add onion and garlic. Cook until onion softens, about 5 minutes.
2. While onions cook, rinse kale, strip greens from center stems and chop coarsely.
3. Add water, wine, black pepper and cayenne pepper to the frypan; stir in.
4. Add potatoes and kale, stirring occasionally as the kale wilts. Cover and adjust heat to maintain a simmer.
5. Cook until potatoes and kale are tender, 15 - 20 minutes (may take longer if potatoes are large or kale is old). Taste for seasoning; add salt if necessary. Serve hot.

Servings: 4

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 20 minutes

What's happening in my patch?

NOT A LOT since I joined the KCGP!!!

The broccoli has got away and looks to be able to provide a good supply of seed for the coming year... (also the bolted florets are a favourite of the parrot next door. Very thoughtful of me I'm sure). The Rocket is looking lush and covered with flowers. It's a nicely flavoured plant so I hope the seeds are true.

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What's happening in my patch continued...

The Red tamarillo has set fruit, large and green, the frost has made the plants look shabby but they're strong in the stem and survived their first winter just fine. The Mandarin set lots of fruit that I have thinned back to three so the energy goes to growth for the first year. The Olives are scrappy, they needed shaping in autumn. They've had the snip now and I expect them to rally in this promising spring. The citrus leaves are yellow, blood and bone would help... Where's the gardener then? My first Guava fell before it was ready, but still I was able to have a couple of mouths full of pink interest. ... Perhaps it IS too cold here...

The brave Avocado seedling has suffered its demise. While I was visiting Kelmarna (a community garden in Auckland), I was advised not to waste 7 or ten years waiting for the jolly thing to fruit. Seedlings notoriously don't! It was unceremoniously ripped up upon my return. I'm thinking now that I'll lash out and buy a grafted model, especially since I've learned avocados can fruit 10 months of the year!

I have a new Braeburn apple planted close to the fence (at the request of the neighbour) ...I have memories of one of my boys having a pre-school romance in an apple tree over our back fence. Very sweet.

Probably the significant new development would be my garden edges. My composting method of scraps in the hole has meant that my soil volume has increased, creating a need for a low retainer.

A bright idea I saw years ago was to use newspaper as bricks. Fold papers down to A4 size, give them a good soak, and then stack them to the required height in rows around the garden edges. It's working pretty well so far. They fade and weather and I will keep them covered with mulch to prevent them drying out and to make sure they stay put. I hope summer is as easy.

Community Garden Update:

Its time you came and had a look! The community workers have completed new beds one and two, double digging their way through the concrete like pan and the same with the holes for the fruit trees. Altogether it was a huge job and they have done it well. Many thanks to all involved.

We have two sacks of potatoes laid out for sprouting. The fruit trees are planted all with two possums beneath.

Except one... it was in the wrong place and had to be moved... they all have a Russell Lupin (nitrogen) and a Comfrey (potassium, phosphorous) in with them. They were planted in time to catch some of the wonderful downpours over the last few weeks. So far we have two apples, a nectarine, a peach, an apricot, 2 oranges, 3 feijoas and 2 plums. YUM!

The Conservation Corps have begun to work the compost heaps and so begins the building up of the soil in the new beds. I am on the trail of a truck that is prepared to head off to Opotoki to pick up seaweed waste. These veggies are going to grow... rubbish soil or not!

The silver beet has been steady, the cabbage and lettuce are coming on but the most productive and interesting looking plants at the moment are the Curly Kale, looking a lot like Sideshow Bob! The swedes are filling out, spring onions are springing, garlic looking strong, peas are up and flowering, strawberries are finally in, broad beans are up, rhubarb picking up in vitality as it warms. Lots of cauli, broccoli, and the shallots are looking good after a slow start and I just found some asparagus corms at the right price that will go in this week. We have also some companion plants that attract beneficial insects; 'catch' harmful insect and these will brighten up the garden with bold colors and variety.

I arrived one morning to see that the digger was in working on the restoration of the riverbank. Happily, he likes watercress, so when asked if a cultivation bed was possible, the answer was yes! Again, I was impressed... I can't wait to see how it will look. He's doing a wonderful clean up. The place has transformed in leaps and bounds.



Progress at the Community Garden at the House of Hope.

If you have any news or views to add to the newsletter please call Telina or Kelly on 323 7377. Remember our Nursery days are Tuesdays and Fridays and Community Garden days on Wednesday and Saturday, unless its wet, then we go back to the Nursery.