

BEELARONG COMMUNITY FARM

To encourage, educate, share and nurture interest in sustainable living
by creating a vibrant community farm within an urban environment.



Farm news by Sara Breckenridge

It is a relief that autumn is upon us - we can spend more time in the garden! Dorothea's rosellas are taking up some space at the farm, as is the sweet potato and pumpkins but as they are harvested we will be mulching and composting the plots and planting all those vegies on the list for this time of year. It is all about soil temperature (yes, I have been using the thermometer). Parsley germinates best at soil temperature 12-25°C; lettuce germinates best at soil temperature 10-25°C; broccoli raab at soil temperature 5-18°C and alyssum at 20°C.

I want to thank all those members who regularly volunteer their time and energy for Beelarong, your spirit is what makes our farm so wonderful. A reminder to all allotment holders that we would love your help in the community garden space – just 15 minutes of your time to help is very much appreciated. Check out the whiteboard in the kitchen area and the fortnightly e-news for little jobs.

Nut grass seems to be a thriving crop at the farm this year. Since we do not have any ducks around to help with the clearing, there are a couple of other organic methods. Phil Dudman reports that nutgrass may be a sign of low calcium levels in the soil so try adding a handful of lime or dolomite to your allotment, or gypsum which will not alter the pH. Regularly drench the plot with molasses diluted 1 cup to a 9 litre watering can. This will increase microbial activity that eventually rots the tubers.

Workshops are a great way to meet fellow gardeners and learn a tip or two, and to swap and share stories. We need your support and attendance because if our workshops are empty we will not be able to run them. Check out our website for more details. Enjoy the weather and happy gardening.

Sara, President of Beelarong Community Farm.

GOLD Programs

All sessions are \$4 and are held at the farm 9:30 - 11:30. To book call the Brisbane City Council on 3403 8888.

Friday 20 April Companion planting

Learn which plants can help keep your garden healthy. Walking tour of the farm included.

Thursday 17 May Relish making

Learn how to make relish and chutney using organic products from the community farm. Walking tour of the farm included.

GOLD'N kids

Thursday 5 April: Easter egg decorating

Learn how to make dye from vegetables collected at the Community garden and use these to decorate Easter eggs with your grandchildren.



Sunday 29 April: Free Brisbane City Council Compost and Worm Farm Workshop 9am – 12pm

Come along to this free workshop which includes the basics of composting and worm farming, including different methods, ingredients and principles by reusing and recycling everyday household materials.

Management Committee

The Beelarong Community Farm's Management Committee meetings are on the first Sunday of the month from 3pm to 4.30 pm. All members are welcome.

Judith's garden tips by Judith Raue

Finally autumn is here, bringing cooler, more pleasant temperatures for gardening.

Things to plant in May are:

- Asian greens
- beans
- capsicum
- endive
- garlic
- kohlrabi
- leeks
- onions
- potatoes
- silver beet
- spinach
- sweet potato and
- tomato.

Towards June you can also put in:

- beetroot
- celery
- chicory
- parsnip
- peas
- potatoes
- swede.

Don't forget to add some colour (and food for bees) to your patch and plant some flowers, such as:

- calendula
- dianthus
- hollyhock
- pansy

- snapdragon
- statice
- stock, strawflower
- sweet pea
- sweet William and
- viola.

Why not try and get your own seedling ready for your plot in the upcoming season - provided you have a little space and time to look after them.

Especially smaller seeds benefit from sown in little punnets, containers or seed raising trays, as you can look after them better.

When they are ready you can easily transplant them into a designated area in your plot. In saying that, plants that have edible roots, such as carrots and radishes are usually better sown straight into the garden bed, as transplanting them can cause the root to deform. Large seeds such as beans and peas can also be put in straight away.

Start off by planning what you would like to eat during winter. Therefore seedlings should go into your garden bed by June/July, which means putting in seeds in April/May.

One rule of thumb is that you only bury your seeds as deep as their size, meaning that small seeds hardly need any covering, whereas a large seed from a bean for example should be totally covered with seed-raising mix.



Check out some of the action and creations at one of our recent fabulous programs. Come on - get involved!



Active Parks Program

Thursday 3 May: Growing your own fabulous organic fruit with Linda Brennan (Part 1)

Brisbane organic expert Linda Brennan will help you decide on the best fruiting plants for your garden and how to prepare and care for them. Workshop is \$5 per person and runs from 10 - 11.30am. Call Ecobotanica 3349 2962 or 0416 157 470.

Thursday 10 May: Growing your own fabulous organic fruit with Linda Brennan (Part 2)

Continue to hear more from this local guru. Workshop is \$5 per person and runs from 10 - 11.30am. Call Ecobotanica 3349 2962 or 0416 157 470.

Saturday 19 May: Garden herbs for companion planting and cooking: It's all about herbs.

Discover how herbs can be used to control pests in your garden. Find out which ones of these herbs you can also eat. Tour of the farm included. Workshop is \$4 per person and runs 9.30-11.30am. Please phone Beelalong Community Farm on 0401 168 657.



Growing garlic at Beelarong by Helene Cooper



I have been growing garlic at Beelarong for about five years and with great success.

I was first given the garlic by family members who live in Bundaberg and they have grown the garlic for quite a number of years prior to that. I was told that it is a variety called "Purple Italian". I have tried a few different varieties without much success so have pretty much stuck with this variety for the last few years now. The biggest challenge is

having the patience to wait for it to grow and not to eat it all before the next planting is due!

Planting season is Autumn/Winter with the harvest around five - six months later. For us this translates in to late March/early April with harvesting in September/October. You need to wait until the cooler weather has started before planting. Soil should be well drained, with a pH above 6.5 and full sun is ideal. Garlic does not like to be crowded by other plants or weeds, so please avoid the temptation to throw in a few quick growing crops amongst your garlic bed.

Individual cloves are planted with the pointy end upwards, around 5cm deep and around 15cm apart. You will usually see small shots emerging within two weeks but if you get a burst of hot weather this can be delayed. It needs regular watering to ensure good bulb development and careful weeding.

The garlic is ready to harvest when the leaves start to turn yellow/brown. Stop watering about a week before harvesting. Remove the whole plant and allow to dry in a warm, covered area. This allows the bulbs to mature and improves their storage life. Once dried remove excess soil and leaves to deter pests taking up residence. If you feel energetic and have the patience the garlic can be plaited which helps as you can then hang it for storage. Garlic can be kept in a cool dry location and will keep for around 12 months.

'Seed garlic', the outside cloves on the garlic bulb, usually has a nice dry skin and is ideal to keep for your next planting. The other cloves to keep are the bulbs along the stalks. I was told that if you plant a mixture of these two cloves then you will have a hardier more reliable crop.

Special use-up-leftovers hummus

"I had to ask around my friends for this recipe as we had **TOO MANY ZUCCHINI AND LARGE SQUASH** left over on the share table. Judith made us the zucchini/squash bake with eggs, cheese and a bit of curry, which was featured in the last Newsletter but still we continued to have too many large squashes left over. Farm members tried it out last Wednesday and liked it.

Marion
Beelarong member



**2 zucchini
or large squash peeled
and chopped**

¾ cup raw tahini

½ cup fresh lemon juice

¼ cup olive oil

4 cloves garlic

2 ½ teaspoons sea salt

**½ tablespoon ground
cumin**

Put all ingredients in a blender and blend on high speed until smooth (should have a thick consistency).



Volunteer news by Di Ferguson

Farm stall at Morningside Fair 2012 – four months to go

This once a year Fair is a way of us making some extra dollars as well as a major PR exercise. Preparations are well under way for our involvement on Sunday 29th July. The stall has to be manned from 9am to about 3.00pm but set up time is about 7am and pull down time just after 3.00pm so I will need a strong man to assist me at these times. We will be looking for volunteers on the day, even if you can spare 30 minutes, to help with general enquiries about the Farm and to attend to sales. Already volunteers have come forward to plant out seedlings and provide TLC to plants that they feel may be suitable for sale. As well as individual herbs I thought we could have slightly larger containers of say three herbs in containers which I still have to source. Last year we arranged herb posies, sold jams, chutneys, lemon butter, tumeric, lemon grass, offered our tee-shirts for sale and had a raffle.

I am hoping to organize some new publicity canvases, depending on price, which can be used for other events. We usually have a give away to kids of sunflower seeds in packets with stickers on. If anyone has any new, achievable ideas, or if anyone can pot a few pots for donating please contact me. I have bought some seedling mix which is in one of the shade houses and we have plenty of pots as well if you need either of these. Best to keep them fairly

small that way we don't use as much potting mix and they are lighter to transport. Thanks to those people who have already voiced their support.

Recent visitor

We recently had an interesting visitor, who has a keen interest in bamboo. Di lived in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province (south of Shanghai) for almost two years as an English Teacher at Yuexiu University of Foreign Languages. Her study was Master of Arts (Writing) and her final assignment was on bamboo. She expects her book to be published in Australia and translated into Chinese for the China market. Several members listened to any information she was able to give. We found a new bamboo shoot which was planted about three years ago and have identified it as Old Hamii. Bamboo has many uses - we just want to make the right choices.

Small glass jars required

We are looking for small glass jars (250g size approximately) with metal lids for a Morningside Project. If you have any contact Brian or Di.

Mowing

Thank you to all who have lent a hand in mowing. All the mowing in our leased area will be now be attended to by Peter. We will still need assistance with the whipper-snipping, so if anyone can help in this area it would be greatly appreciated.

Our garden - an inspiration

Production Co-ordinator of local 'Common Thread' Sally O'Brien contacted me to ask for my participation with a group of kids at Balmoral High School recently.

Sally asked me to speak for fifteen minutes on how I became involved with Beelarong Farm. So with my trusty props – a basket filled with vegetation and rosella jam - I spoke to a keen audience. The feedback from students and facilitators was very positive and in the debriefing session at the end, the kids came up with lots of inspired and interesting ideas to work on. This session is a very important part of the process and I look forward to seeing what the students, teachers and artists will translate what they heard into ideas for theatre. At the end of the session I asked the kids how many of them had garden beds in their own yards and was taken back by how many hands were raised. Common Thread's website is www.commonthread.com.au.