

APRIL MOON PLANTING GUIDE

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1 ☽ ☾	2 ☽ ☾	3	4
5 ☽ ☾ 🐄	6 ☾ ☽ 🐄	7 ☽ ☾	8 ☽ ☾ 🌱	9 ☽ ☾ 🌱	10	11
12	13	14 ●	15 ☽	16 ☽	17 ☽	18 🌱
19 🌱	20 ☽	21 ☽	22 ☾	23	24 ☽	25 ☽
26 🌱	27 🌱	28 🌱 ○	29 ☽ ☾	30		

Thanks to Gisela and Iris
www.moontimediary.com.au

GARDENER'S KEY

Seedling Planting Days	Any day that's not too wet or too hot.	
Seed Planting Days	☽	
Fertilising Foliar Spray	☾	Solids 🐄
Weeding	🌱	

SEEDLING DELIVERY SCHEDULE

MONDAY AM

Mullumbimby Rural Co-op
Fundamental Foods, Byron Bay
Santos, Byron Bay
Lennox Head Garden Centre
FoodWorks Bangalow
Wards Landscape Supplies Mullumbimby
Mullum Herbal, Mullumbimby
Uncle Toms, Mullum Gateway
Brunswick Health Foods

MONDAY PM

True Value, Ocean Shores
Fresh Wholefoods Murwillumbah
Wray Organic Palm Beach

TUESDAY AM

Lismore Organic Farmer's Market
Fundamental Foods, Lismore
Precious Plants Lismore

WEDNESDAY AM

Fundamental Foods Paddington Brisbane

THURSDAY AM

Mullumbimby Rural Co-op
Fundamental Foods, Byron Bay
Santos, Byron Bay
Lennox Head Garden Centre
FoodWorks Bangalow
Wards Landscape Supplies Mullumbimby
Mullum Herbal, Mullumbimby
Uncle Toms, Mullum Gateway
Brunswick Health Foods
True Value Hardware Ocean Shores

SUNDAY MARKETS

Byron Bay
The Channon
Uki
Bangalow

Farmer's Choice Organics

ORGANIC SEEDLINGS

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THE GROWER'S GUIDE

April 2010

Farmer's Choice Organics

ORGANIC SEEDLINGS



With Love to Your Garden



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Happy days are here again.

The blue skies of Dry season will be over us soon, and what great growing conditions they bring forth! And with a little effort there's enjoyment to be had if you start the Ground Work NOW! So let's get down to it. "The Old Woollen Blanket" it's a winter gardens best friend, laid over the garden bed it creates an artificial ceiling for the soil biology to rise up into, and attempt to colonize all the yummy food offerings under it, in return they rapidly convert your offerings into soil. Comfrey leaf is a compost accelerator, bonus! When Comfrey rots down it delivers a natural source of potassium to aid flowering and fruiting plants. So grab your blanket now and build your gardens soil structure up with fresh organic matter, compost-worm caste, well rotted grass clippings, an abundant amount of comfrey leaves and a strong mix of seaweed solution, water the bed in well and cover with your old woollen blanket for 10 to 14 days(longer in cool areas). Water the blanket each morning to maintain moisture levels which aid organic decomposition, and gently turn the soil every few days till it comes to a fine humic state. Yum! You could put it on bread and butter it smells that sweet. **Ness & Greg**

Have you got worms?

Earth worms are known for their ability to improve the structure of soils that they colonise, their close relatives the compost worm have a similar role in organic matter.

Although the media can be quite different in texture much of the physical labour performed by these organisms' aims to achieve the same benefits in soil and organic matter. Overall the worms are hunting for organic matter that is alive with microscopic organisms which the worms plan to eat to gain energy.

Most benefits associated with worms in a production area can be related to the increased amount of air space and improved water filtration into the channels that worms create in the root zone of plants. Another bonus from migrating colonies of worms is the Vermi caste that is left behind.

The term Vermi is as in Worm or a lattice structure and Caste is a term used for structure of mineral or organic matter deposited from living organisms.

Plants do appreciate this vermi caste as they can benefit by extending their telescopic roots into the areas where caste is deposited, these sites within the soil profile are where dissolved nutrients can be quickly digested by the plant to stimulate growth.

Much of the success of this process is attributed to the micro organisms that live on the plant roots and convert this organic matter into a form of nutrient that the plant can absorb.

Success with these forms of concentrated organic matter are usually in its method of application, producers who mix organic matter into their soil or apply them when the plant is open to feeding can achieve extraordinary growth rates. You will first notice that plants grown with these products grow all of the time! Of course, watering and selective fertilising is important but the amount of water or fertiliser that is required will be reduced relative to plant growth.

Other features of plants grown with assistance from biological partners are increased seed germination and healthier plants with balanced fruits for building a stronger immune system.

Leo Mclean - Technical Representative - Tryton

Organic matter...mate.



AUTUMN IS BRASSICA TIME

Brassicas is the collective name for all members of the cabbage family tree, which has Asian species as well as European origin. Also known as Crucifers, due to the four petals in a cross shape, they are one of the few plant groups not hosting mycorrhizal fungi in their root system. It is an extremely diverse functional plant family due to the wide selections from cross pollination. This also means much care is needed to save seeds which are true to type. Seed saving also needs to prevent transmission of fungal disease such as Blackleg by placing in 50°C water for 20 minutes. Nearly all our common European brassicas have been developed by selection from the "weed" wild mustard, and similarly the Asian types from a slender "weed" version of Bok Choy. These have been developed into cultivars, which never occurred naturally, which emphasis certain physical characteristics. Examples are bunching leaves – cabbage and brussels sprouts ; swollen stems – Kohl rabi and radish, turnips; flowers – broccoli and cauliflower, stocks, nasturtiums, wallflowers and Gai lan; leaves – kale, rocket, watercress, mustards, mizuna and the choys. Most cultivars grow best over the cooler months of autumn, winter and spring. Planting for early harvest in February needs vigilance for caterpillars, particularly cluster caterpillar in the new leaves, and shade if its hot. Last planting for these types is in August, although the Chinese greens are more summer heat tolerant.

As most cultivars need fast leaf growth, a more nitrogenous bacterial compost, giving a near neutral pH, will support that. Also needed are good mineral levels of calcium, phosphorus, sulphur and potassium. Trace element deficiencies in gardens well supplied with organic matter are rare, but boron and molybdenum as part of fish/seaweed sprays will prevent them. An important benefit of high carbon mulches is that they are broken down by fungi, which supports a food web to restrict root diseases from build up. Brassicas especially the mustard types are good in rotation with the tomato family to stop root pests from building up, and the flowers are full of nectar for beneficial insects.

The main above ground pests are caterpillars so the use of BT ,Derris dust or Spinosad will prevent and cure leaf eaters if hand squishing isn't enough. Aphis also can feed on them at times so the use of horticultural oil sprays will restrict them if good coverage is achieved. Occasionally, in Spring, Rutherglen bugs will devastate Asian types. Growers will often leave these to them as sacrificial crops, so the pest doesn't move on to other plants. White blister or rust affects all brassicas ,but with different symptoms. The worst show on the leafy types like Rocket and the choys as white raised areas. It is best managed by not wetting the leaves when watering, even from the nursery stage, as the infection occurs then but symptoms show later.

The regular supply of brassicas from the garden provides important nutritional requirements from major and trace minerals, to sulphur based compounds which are all protective against disease, if not destroyed by over cooking.

Dave Forrest - Dip App Sci (Hort), Grad Dip Ed, TROPO President, Certified Organic farmer, TAFE Organic Agriculture Teacher

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IN THE GARDEN WITH CARLA

Hi Fellow Foodies, Another hot month has been and gone and the soil is still warm enough for us to get our winter beds planted out. It seems to be a never- ending summer! Hopefully it will start cooling down soon so we can all have a bit of relief and spend more time on our addiction- Gardening!

So get cracking and replenish the soil with a good organic compost, manures and worm casts and then plant out your veges, topped off with mulch and a good watering - in with seaweed. (Seaweed is like a health tonic for plants. As well as adding nutrients, it stimulates new root growth, reduces transplant shock, helps plants become more pest and disease resistant and frost and drought tolerant).

Tips for this month....

Apart from the traditional winter veges, Autumn is also a great time to plant strawberries, spring flowering herbs and of course it's the best time of year to plant natives (plant some shrubs for small birds-great for diversity and natural pest control). Add a bird bath with a shallow landing for the bees so they won't drown.

Prune back your existing natives and fruit trees and replenish old tired herbs like parsley.

Rotating crops helps reduce the incidence of nutrient deficiencies and soil borne diseases transmitting from plant to plant.

Why not try companion planting! This is a method often used by organic growers to help in the growth of plants by one or more of the following ways-

- The scent or shape of some plants will help repel and confuse pests.
- The legume family are nitrogen fixing and will supply nitrogen to other plants.
- Do your research. Some plants are antagonistic to others and can be detrimental.

Here are just a few companion planting combinations for your winter vege garden:

Turnips, peas, radish	Carrots, chives, basil, thyme,
Strawberries, onions, lettuce	Cabbage, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, rosemary, pennyroyal, marigolds, sage, oregano
Celery, leeks, carrots, onions, lettuce	Peas, calendula, basil
Cabbage, onions	Cauliflower, shallots, thyme, oregano
Broccoli, feverfew, chives	For perennial Basil-try Greek or Bush Basil

3 tips to success: Compost - Mulch - Seaweed

For me, It's still a wee bit too hot for this old chook being an ex Blue Mountain girl, so I'm still dodging those rays and can't wait to get lost in my garden again. So come on Autumn - where are you!

Carla Tipping

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