

Pershore Allotment Association
Newsletter
May 2008
Helping you grow

...And that's an Allotment fact!

Radishes are the fastest vegetable to reach maturity from seed. If conditions are right, they can be ready to eat just four weeks after planting.

Courgettes, cucumbers and tomatoes give the highest yield – up to 2kg of fruit per plant!

www.pershoreallotments.com



Yes, Pershore Allotment Association now has its own website! Come and join us at www.pershoreallotments.com – leave us a comment and let us know what you think.

With something for all ages, you're sure to enjoy the site. There are plenty of ideas for things to do, make and see.

If you want to keep up to date with events, activities and be the first to receive our newsletter, why not join our mailing list?

Our Junior Allotmenters pages are a great starting point for our younger members – full of hints, tips and information including this month's easy-to-follow instructions on how to make a herb garden.

If you would like to submit photographs, drawings or an article to the website, please email persshoreallotments@hotmail.co.uk or put a copy in the post box on the wall of the Gardener's Arms shop. If you have any suggestions, we would love to hear from you. We want the website to be as useful to you as possible, so get involved and tell us what you think!

Dates for your diary

Saturday 17th May
 11.00am – Gardener's Arms Shop clear-out sale and Plant Swap – see posters for more details.

June 2008
 Allotment of the Year competition – the closing date for individual nominations is 30.06.08.

July 2008
 Pershore in Bloom – as in previous years, the allotments will be judged on water conservation, environmental awareness and presentation.

11-17 August 2008
 National Allotments Week, run by the National Allotment Gardens Trust (NAGT).

In Focus – Pea and Bean Weevil

These pesky beasties love nothing better than to munch away on our peas and beans, leaving distinctive crescent-shaped calling cards at the edges of the leaves. They also chew through flower stems, causing the flowers to drop off before they can set into pods. Not content with this, they lay their eggs under the soil surface. Then, when the larvae hatch out, they snack on the roots too. At no more than 5mm long, and the same colour as soil, the adults can be very hard to spot.

The best defence is derris powder, but planting broad beans in autumn, and starting your other peas and beans off indoors gives your plants a fighting chance to fend off the attack.



Jobs for May and June

- ✓ If your pea and bean supports aren't up yet, it's time to erect these. With the last frosts past peas and beans can be planted out now.
- ✓ Continue to sow carrot, radish and lettuce seeds for a continuous harvest.
- ✓ Beetroot can go straight in the ground from this month.
- ✓ Courgettes, cucumbers and squashes can now be sown into prepared beds.
- ✓ Get your sweetcorn patch ready – remember: sweetcorn is wind-pollinated so needs to be planted in blocks, not rows.
- ✓ Cover sweetcorn seedlings with cloches to give them an extra boost.

Baby Broad Beans and Chorizo

Chorizo is a Spanish spicy cured sausage – even available at the Co-op! Similar to German and French cured sausages, it is already cooked so can be eaten straight away, or gently fried. The smoky flavour comes in part from the smoked peppers included in the spice mix, and makes the perfect accompaniment to the sweet juiciness of young broad beans.

Pick the beans when the pods are between 10cm and 25cm long for the perfect beans for this dish.

Ingredients:

- A handful of podded broad beans per person
- 10cm (4 inches) of chorizo, chopped, per person

Method:

- Bring a small pan of water to the boil and boil the baby broad beans for 3 minutes. At the same time, gently fry the chorizo pieces for the same length of time.
- Drain the broad beans and add them to the frying pan. Take off the heat and stir them in the juice from the chorizo.
- Serve hot.



Hawthorn Blossom Wine

Ingredients:

- 4 pints (2.25kg) hawthorn blossom
- 1.5kg sugar
- 2 lemons
- 4.5 litres water (3.5 litres if using grape juice)
- Yeast nutrient
- Yeast
- 1tsp grape tannin or 1 litre white grape juice

Method:

Grate off the lemon rind and boil with sugar, water and juice from one lemon for 30 minutes. Pour into a plastic bucket and allow to cool. When between 20°C-28°C, add the yeast, yeast nutrient and grape tannin or grape juice. Cover and stand for 24 hours. Add the flowers and leave for another 8 days, stirring each day.

Strain the liquid through a sieve or muslin into your fermentation vessel, seal and fit an air lock. Leave for about 3 months then rack. Rack into bottles after a further 3 months. Can be drunk straight away, but it will improve with age.



Rhubarb and Ginger Cheesecake

Ingredients:

- 400g rhubarb stems, peeled and chopped
- 100g + 100g caster sugar
- 100g crumbly digestive biscuits
- 100g ginger biscuits
- 75g butter, melted
- 10cm (4 inches) root ginger, peeled and chopped (or 2tsp ground ginger)
- 200g cream cheese
- 200g cottage cheese
- 100ml milk
- 2 eggs, separated
- 2tbsp cornflour

Method:

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Put the rhubarb and 100g of sugar in a pan and cook on a low heat for 10 minutes. Set aside about a quarter for serving with the finished cheesecake.

Crush the biscuits by hand or with a rolling pin. Melt the butter in a saucepan and stir in the crushed biscuits. Tip into a cake tin lined with greaseproof paper and press down to form the base. Put this in the fridge to harden while you make the topping.

Sieve the cream cheese and cottage cheese into a bowl. Add the milk, egg yolks, 100g of sugar and cornflour. Whisk until smooth. Stir in the rhubarb and the ginger. Whisk the egg whites in a separate bowl until fluffy, then gently fold them into the mixture. Pour over the crumb base and bake in the oven for about 1 hour, until a skewer comes out clean.

Remove and cool completely. Cut into slices and serve with a spoonful of the remaining rhubarb.



Dictionary Corner:

Crucifers



Crucifers, or cruciferous plants, are plants which have four-petaled flowers. Their seed-leaves usually appear as a pair, often with a dent or groove in the centre of the edge of each leaf.

Examples of crucifers are:

Cress	Rocket
Cauliflower	Broccoli
Radishes	Sprouts
Cabbages	Kale



The major pests of crucifers include flea beetles, caterpillars and slugs/snails. The only guarantee of protection is to start seedlings off in modules, protected from the ground, and only plant out healthy specimens that are robust enough to withstand and outgrow an attack.

Crucifers are also susceptible to clubroot, a disease which distorts and badly damages the root, preventing the plant from taking up essential nutrients.

Crucifers are low in calories and fat, and high in many nutrients such as Vitamin A, Vitamin C, calcium and iron. They also help to boost the immune system and may help to protect the body against cancer. Because of their high fibre content, they help to make you feel full for longer.

The Gardener's Arms Shop – Open for Business

We are pleased to announce that the Gardener's Arms Shop will be open for business throughout the finer months of 2008, starting Saturday 30th May/Sunday 1st June.

We currently have volunteers to staff the shop on:

**Saturdays and Sundays of alternate weekends,
10 am – 12.00 noon, and 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm.**

The shop stocks a variety of seeds, fertiliser, tools and equipment, all at more than reasonable prices. Collective orders may be placed from time to time, depending on interest levels, which take advantage of the various offers open to society and association group purchases.

If you would like to see the shop open on more weekends, please consider volunteering just two hours of your time. Please speak to any of the committee members, or email [persoreallotments@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pershoreallotments@hotmail.co.uk).



The P.A.A. would like to say...

To the outgoing members of Pershore Allotment Association, we would like to thank you for all the time and effort you have put in over the years. We, old and new members, are optimistic that renewed interest in keeping the spirit of the Association alive will ensure many active years ahead of us.

Yours are large shoes to fill, but we hope to rise to the challenge. We trust you will enjoy the time you now have to simply enjoy your allotments, knowing others are working on your behalf.

We would particularly like to offer our thanks and appreciation to Brian Bremer, Chair; Gilly Pay, Treasurer; and Alan Tandy, editor. Your time and dedication have set a high standard, which you will hopefully feel is met by our own efforts.



Allotment of the Year Competition

How good is your allotment? 2008 sees the fourth annual Allotment of the Year competition, run by the National Allotment Gardens Trust. This year there are two categories – the main competition to find the best allotment in the country, and a further category of best newcomer, someone who has held their plot for less than three years as at 30th June 2008.

With prizes ranging from a Mantis Cultivator to vouchers for Kings Seeds, among other as yet unconfirmed prizes, entry is well worth considering. Entry forms will be available from the Gardener's Arms shop, or by emailing [persoreallotments@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pershoreallotments@hotmail.co.uk), or you can visit the National Allotment Gardens Trust's website at: www.nagtrust.org/page11.html.

Entry is only open to individual allotmenters, so Societies and Allotment Associations are unable to enter. The main areas the judges will be looking at are: areas of cultivation and cropping, husbandry and environmental awareness. There are some wonderful responses to these issues on the Pershore site, so why not enter today?

Closing date: 30th June 2008

The Seedlings Club

Q: Why did the tomato go red?
A: Because it saw the salad dressing!



Plant your Hallowe'en pumpkins now!

Pumpkin plants need plenty of space so make sure they are at least 50cm away from any other plants. Choose where you want to plant your pumpkins and dig the soil with a fork, removing any weeds and roots as these would compete with your pumpkin plant for food and water.

Pumpkins need a lot of food, so spread some compost or manure over the dug area and mix it into the top layer of soil with your fork. Water it well, then make a shallow hole with your finger in the middle of the area and drop a pumpkin seed into it. Make another hole a few centimetres from the first and plant another pumpkin seed in it. Cover them over with soil.

To prevent slugs eating your seedlings, crush some egg shells and scatter these in a circle around your seeds. Cover the area with chicken wire or garden mesh to keep the birds away.

When they are a few centimetres tall, pull up the weaker of the two seedlings to give the stronger one plenty of room to grow.



Your pumpkins will start to form in September, and should be ready for Hallowe'en at the end of October.

Puzzle Corner

The words below are hidden in the word search. Can you find them all? They can be in any direction, but always in a straight line.

When you have found all the words, the remaining letters, when read in order, spell out what all these things have in common.

T	H	S	T	A	K	E	E	Y	S	A	D
W	O	R	R	A	B	R	R	E	H	T	I
O	O	L	O	S	S	O	T	H	E	A	B
E	N	I	W	T	H	T	T	C	A	A	B
M	O	W	E	R	A	O	P	N	R	B	E
E	U	S	L	I	E	V	E	I	S	T	R
E	E	D	O	M	D	A	I	N	C	E	A
N	D	A	L	M	G	T	F	T	L	K	W
O	A	D	Z	E	E	O	T	M	L	C	A
E	P	N	T	R	R	R	O	R	G	U	L
A	S	R	A	K	E	R	D	E	N	B	C

Adze	Dibber	Pick	Spade
Barrow	Edger	Rake	Stake
Bucket	Fork	Rotovator	Strimmer
Claw	Hoe	Shears	Trowel
Cultivator	Mower	Sieve	Twine

They are all:

Getting stuck in!

Allotmenters are amazing people: they come from all walks of life, from a huge variety of professions and come in all ages and sizes. One thing we all have in common is our passion for growing. Whether it is fruit, veg, flowers or just an outdoor space to call our own, we love it. So show us what our community is made of, and get stuck in!

- Social events just aren't social without you – every person counts, so why not make it a family affair?
- The Gardener's Arms shop is there for you, and the more it is used, the more useful and relevant to you we can make it.
- Join the Association. The greater our numbers, the greater our impact and the more we can achieve.
- Lend a hand – just two hours makes all the difference.
- Talk to us. Tell us what you think, and what you want to see. With your help, we can make a difference.



Next issue due out: July 2008

In the next issue:

Events: National Allotment Week – what it is all about, and what you can do to celebrate.

In Focus: Winter crops – what to grow, when to sow and how you can have a plentiful winter harvest.

The Seedlings Club: Free seeds for next year – how you can save seeds from your own flowers, fruit and vegetables.

The Write Staff: Fancy seeing your name in print? Write 150-200 words about your favourite allotment-related topic and email it to us, or drop it into the Gardener's Arms shop.

For Sale/Wanted: Let us know if you would like to sell, exchange or give away an item, or if you are looking for something that another allotmenteer might be able to help you with.