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HERB GROWER

Published bi-monthly by the ORGANIC HERB GROWERS OF AUSTRALIA INC.

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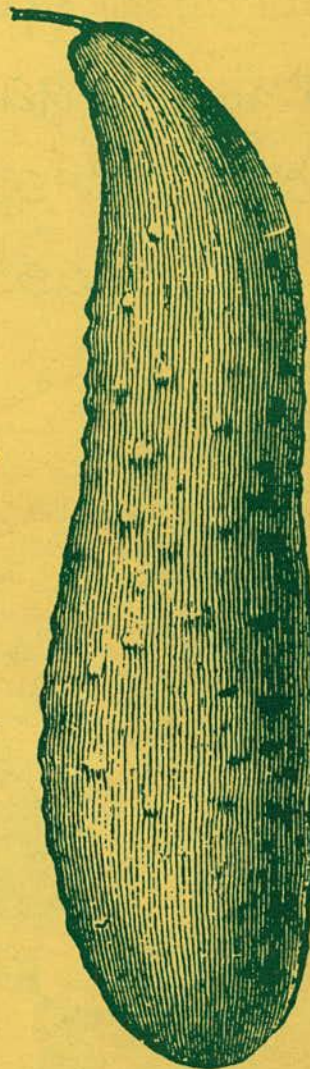
ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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on Top, Gardening by the
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Stories, and much more.....

RECENTLY CONGRESS BANNED THE SALE OF ASSAULT RIFLES.

HOWEVER, IT IS STILL PERFECTLY LEGAL TO KILL SOMEONE WITH A ZUCCHINI.

When it became impossible to ignore the hundreds of deaths caused each year by assault rifles, some of these terrible weapons were finally banned. But each year thousands of men, women and children die from cancer caused by toxic pesticides on fruits and vegetables, yet these poisons remain legal. This poisoning must stop. So we're forming neighborhood networks across the nation to show the big food corporations



that there are thousands of outraged customers who demand a halt to this toxic assault on their families. Your children, too, deserve fruits and vegetables that won't give them cancer. Next time you shop, tell your produce manager you want the toxic food out of the store. And please join us. Call 1-800-EAT SAFE. Together we can do what Washington won't.

FOOD & WATER
INCORPORATED
ENVIRONMENTAL
RESEARCH FOUNDATION

THIS IS AN ADVERTISEMENT WHICH APPEARED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES IN JULY 1995, AS PART OF THE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN BY THE US ORGANIC INDUSTRY AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS. A GOOD EXAMPLE WHAT GETTING TOGETHER CAN DO.....

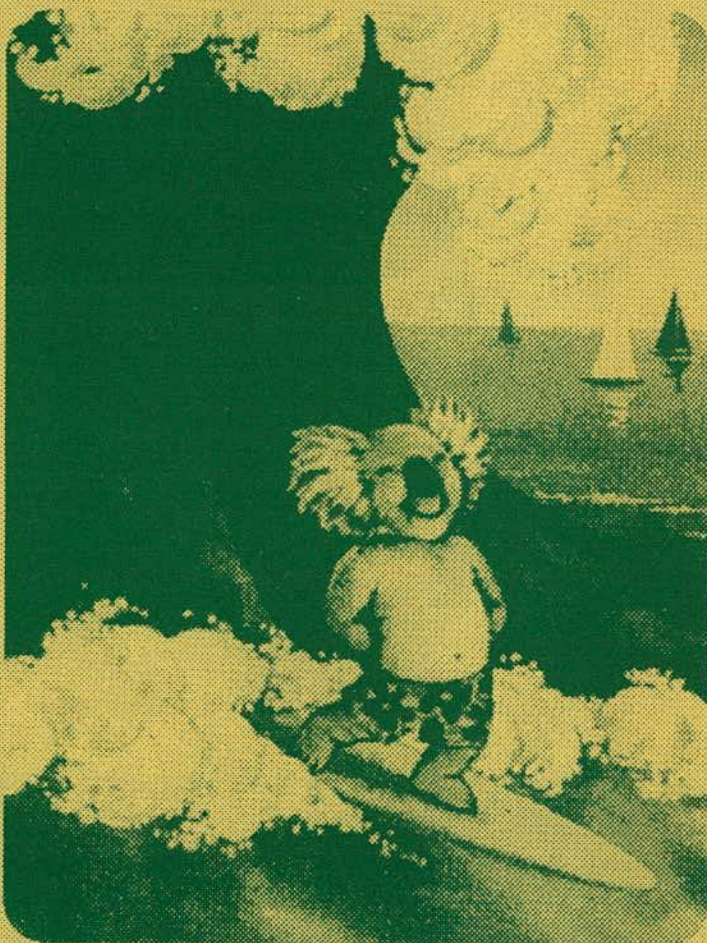


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First of all I would like to thank you for your comments on the green renewal form. There was a whole stack waiting for me when I got back from my trip. Since the names were no longer attached to the forms I don't know what came from who, and there are a few people who I'd like to get into contact with me. There's one person who is offering articles from old copies of 'the Ecologist'. That sounds enticing. Another form carries the idea of a roving reporter who could see what the various members are up to. Sounds good to me, but why don't you, our members who are in other regions, write in and tell us all about it? Maybe one day we will have enough funds to send someone out on the road. Actually, Tony is the one who does meet with a lot of you. Maybe we can get him to inform us of what's going on out there. There also came some requests for articles on subjects like the exact role of AQIS/OPAC, companion planting, marketing, packaging and labelling, drying sheds (anyone out there who could do us a story on that please?), new organic methods and grower info. And a good suggestion is a feedback page. This one has been popping up regularly and the next issue will see the start of it, but to fill a whole page we need you of course. Write in with questions, problems or comments etc. I hope to fulfill all your requests. For me it's really exciting to see how you're getting involved. We now have several members who have offered to write articles, some of which have already come in. Good stuff! We're also getting more and more letters for publication. I'll find room for them all, and if you don't find yourself in this issue it's only because I've run out of space and you'll be in the next one.

Our photography competition has been less than successful so far, but then, as a few people remarked, it was not the right time of year for it. In this issue you'll find another article on photography, especially for Aussie conditions. Hopefully you'll be inspired by it and start sending us some colour photos for the front page. Thank you to the lovely people from HerbPharm who send us the great echinacea pics.

My overseas trip was lovely. Freya and I spent a week in Guatemala and a few days in L.A. before going on to Amsterdam for my dad's 80th. Guatemala was beautiful. We were there in the rainy season and got drenched a few times, but it was worth it seeing the country so green and lush, with neat little growing plots everywhere, mostly planted with corn, cabbages and black beans. Valleys with wisps of cloud, beautiful rainforests, Mayan ruins and women in the most colourful Indian dress with ribbons braided through their long black hair. L.A. was fun too. We were treated to very cheerful and funny black shop assistants everywhere. The white american isn't nearly as much fun and looks either frantic or depressed. Holland was meeting up with my relatives, of which unfortunately there are fewer all the time as the younger generations have decided against procreation. My Dad's birthday was lovely and it's getting harder to say goodbye every year. Amsterdam people look even more conservative than last time. At least they are as much against the french tests as we are, and European governments have been looking into possibilities of taking the french to court and stopping them, but can't find any yet.

Back home I bought myself 'the amazing worm factory' from one of our advertisers. I must say that I love it. It's not only the best looking contraption for worms that I've seen, but those worms never take a break from eating. It's fabulous and I can recommend it to everyone.

You'll see a little article on the NASAA/BFA conference in this issue. How and I went on the Saturday and we had some very useful talks with the people from these groups. The dinner, even though it was not organic, was delicious. The Workers' Club houseband was a bit off-putting, so we didn't stay till the end (having been in the music biz in the sixties and seventies has definitely turned us into music-snobs!) but we're glad we went.

Nothing else to report, except that I turned 50 last month, which we celebrated with a party to which some lovely people turned up, some of whom I hadn't met before and I'm very happy to know now. One friend drove all the way up from Sydney. Another decorated the garden with his beautiful lanterns, while above the moon was almost full. It was magic and a great start to my next half-century! Thank you all.

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Absolute copy deadline (for ads, letters, articles etc) for the January/February issue is November 20th.



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AUSTRALIA Inc.**

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For membership fees, see the form at the
back of the magazine.

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This issue of HERB GROWER is printed by
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AGM REPORT

It must have been a mistake for the
committee to decide to just have a social
AGM, without a field day, because we had
only 25 people turn up to the Channon Tea
House, whereas we usually get at least 50 in a
field. We'll know for next year!

Howard, Magda, Robyn and Lea were duly
re-elected to their respective positions.
For the other three committee positions there

were six nominations and for the first time
ever we actually had a ballot!

Nominated were Alister Janetzki, Elle
Fikke-Rubin, Dave Carey, Don Scholten,
Deborah Chard, all from our region, and
Ted Forbes from Fernvale in Queensland.

Ted was elected after giving us a speech
about other regions needing representation
on the committee.

There were an equal amount of votes for
Alister, Elle and Deborah and after a
recount Alister graciously proposed to
leave his official committee position, and
Elle and Deborah were in. Alister will keep
attending committee meetings and
contributing to OHGA as always.

It was a real shame that we could not
enlarge the committee as originally
planned but after enquiries we learned that
the OHGA Constitution needs an official
change if we want to do that.

That process will be started at the next
committee meeting and we'll work out
changes for you to vote on during this
membership year.



BD PREPARATIONS

*Anyone wanting BD preps, please put
in your order before the end of November.*

Prices are:

\$2/acre for 500 & 501

\$8.50 for a small set

*or \$12 for a large set
of 502 - 507 (compost preps).*

*Add \$1 for p & p
and enclose payment with your order
to*

*OHGA,
P O Box 6171,
South Lismore 2480.*





OHGA's mail

Dear Howard,

Please find attached renewal cheque for 1995-96.

I would like to thank Elle for her fearless Editorials and her Gardening by the Moon series, which has finally made Gardening by the Moon understandable for us.

Most importantly, I would like to comment on the Herb Conference at Tocal. My wife Chris and I were at the conference and came away a little disturbed as to where the Herb Industry was heading, particularly now that the Dept of Agriculture have suddenly become active in the formation of an Industry Association.

After hearing some of the Department officials speak, heard them at workshops and the comments made at the field day, quote "Agriculture to me relates only to the hip pocket" unquote, I can only conclude that with few exceptions they show little interest in Organic methods in the Herb industry. Having them as a main "player" in the formation of an Association, together with large retailers and non organic growers sends shivers up my spine, and I do not see such an Association being of any benefit to the already successful and effective OHGA Inc.

Some people may argue that the only way to get change is to work from the inside, but with this combination of self-interested groups, nobody in the Organics movement deserves to be made a martyr to the cause.

The question that arises, however, is can we survive being outside such an Organisation? I think so, and if you can bear with me, I would like to relay the following story.

In 1957 I joined a small Life Insurance Company and was offered to join the Staff Credit Union, becoming a Director in 1966.

This Staff Credit Union was founded with the blessings and support of the Managing Director of the Company in 1954 and was the second one started in NSW.

Its purpose, as a co-operative, was to provide short term, low interest loans to the staff whilst paying an almost comparable commercial At

Call interest rate to its investors, i.e. the staff of the Company. The slightly lesser investment rate was acceptable to the members as most of them had loans.

The Credit Union movement was "overlooked" by the Registrar of Credit Unions and in the early days the relationship was almost on a one to one basis.

I presume that with the expansion of the Movement such a close relationship became impossible, and an INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION was formed to SPEAK ON BEHALF of its members with the Statutory Body.

Our Staff Credit Union never joined the Association because we were very small and did not wish to pay the subscription fee which was based on \$x per member, and which would have eaten a large hole into our surplus. As far as we were concerned the Surplus was there for the sole use of the Members, in the form of rebates of loan interest and for interest on deposits.

We were referred to by the Registrar as "Antigonish" (which I interpret to mean that we were defiant, as was Antigone, the daughter of Oedipus and Jocasta, who defied her uncle Creon by performing funeral rites for her brother Polynices.)

Staying outside the Association proved to be the correct decision as the subscriptions to the Association rose to a level that would have put us out of business. We were fortunate that the Directors worked voluntary and the resources of the Insurance Company were at our disposal at no charge, which enabled us to operate profitably.

As the Credit Union Movement grew, so also did the Association, and through it the Statutory Body required the Co-operatives to become Registered Companies. (This was no great financial burden, as we all had to buy one share at \$1 each.)

Eventually auditing rules were changed, in that we had to have an audit completed by the "Suits" from the big buildings, whose fees were FAR in excess of our surplus. We were again saved by the Insurance Company absorbing these fees.

In spite of all this, together with additional reporting to the Registrar, increased allocations to Reserves, limits to our lending, repeated requests to shut down or merge, annual visits by an Inspector (normally every 2-3 years) and other impositions, the little Credit Union refused to join the Association. For nearly 40 years it went about its business of providing



short term, low interest loans to its members (yes, even during the later half of the eighties) and providing near commercial At-Call rates of interest to its investors. Nobody could touch us, because we did nothing wrong, broke no rules and were efficient in all reporting and statutory activities.

The Credit Union finally merged with another local group, when the Insurance Company was sold and the less than enlightened new owners refused to allow it to continue on the previous basis.

I gather from your report that you may feel quite comfortable recommending an "Antigonish" stand in relationship to this new Association.

I thank you for your excellent Organisation.

Best wishes,

David A. Leese, Neutral Bay NSW.

Dear OHGA,

In reference to the query "is it really worth it?" of Elle's Editorial, July/August 1995.

Well now, it really is - for the Government Bodies who want to have control;

it really is - for Big Business, who climb on the Clean Organic slogan;

it really is - for Importers who cope easily with low tariffs; rather than really trying to get the Australian herb industry off the ground.

European and American controlling bodies must reckon we are a laugh a minute. We have one of the very, very few CLEAN countries left in the world, and I am sure that they are of the opinion that there is NO way that the so called Level playing field will ever balance in our favour so long as they control the situation.

"Forget the ethics, get the money", seems to be the motto of legislators, so let us "Keep the Ethics and our Money". Our standards are very high and kept that way by inspections and tests all the time. So long as we sell a good clean product, our OHGA name will be stronger.

Yours, Fred Allott N^o 103, Glenn Innes 2370.

Thanks Fred, my sentiments entirely!

Fred Allott is an OHGA member of very long standing, and one of the first to have his very productive herb farm certified by OHGA way back when...

- Elle

Dear Howard,

I don't know if you are a member of the Spice Association of Australasia but in case you're not

I thought you would be interested in the results of their AGM during which they discussed the possibility of becoming the umbrella organization for the herb industry. This possibility arose as a result of the meeting that Clarrie organized subsequent to the Tocal Conference. Representation at that meeting included 2 growers, a rep from the Durundur network, Ian Hemphill, a couple of departmental people and several manufacturers/importers - the presence of the 'industry' in terms of the growers was notable by their absence!

Fortunately the Spice Association voted against involvement in the industry as a canopy body. It was felt that 1) it was not their role, 2) their administration would be swamped by potential growers, 3) such a move would divert the association from its aims and objectives. Pertinent to their discussions was the belief that potential growers would be unwilling to fund a canopy body, only take the benefits, which is so true.

What happens now remains to be seen but I would expect the status quo to continue until the networks that are currently investigating the industry potential firmly establish themselves as a base for industry development in each state.

I'm enclosing my cheque for renewal of membership.

Best wishes, Kim Fletcher, Focus on Herbs, Launceston, Tas.

Dear Jeff and Noelle,

Just browsing through the good ol' Herb Grower when I came across your letter and request for book advice. Since the official reply didn't seem to offer much help, I thought I'd just let you know about one book called "Lothian Successful Organic Gardening Herbs" by Patricia Michalak, edited by Cheryl Maddocks, published by Lothian. I read a very positive review of this book in 'Earth Garden' (Winter '95) recently, and the book is available from that magazine at \$29.95.

I'd advise you to have a read of the review and go from there.

Best wishes and good luck,
Sally Newham, Whian Whian, Northern NSW.

Dear Mr. Rubin,

As a regional organisation of organic and bio-dynamic farmers we want to express our concern that the National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce is still not binding



and in force for the domestic market in Australia. This severely jeopardises the marketing of genuine organic and bio-dynamic produce, which is not protected against competition from non-certified sources.

We are very sceptical that the National Food Authority in co-operation with AQIS can achieve the target of a binding standard for the domestic market and therefore urge our certification bodies to co-operate and form the overdue Australian Umbrella Organisation. Such entity could multiply the political thrust and by itself serve as administration and supervising body for a domestic standard.

We would appreciate if this letter would be read out at your next general meeting and its contents made a special item on the agenda.

A copy of this letter has also been sent to the following organisations:

Bio-Dynamic Research Institute,
Biological Farmers of Australia,
National Association for Sustainable Agriculture,
Organic Retailers and Growers Association.

Yours sincerely, Keith A. Cox
President of Riverina Organic Farmers
Organisation, Marrar NSW.

Dear Elle,

There was someone at Mt Gambier wanting to know about Australian books on herb growing. I picked up a "Yates" guide to herb growing by Jackie French, which has an Australian focus and therefore added some more information for me. It's produced by Angus & Robertson.

Sincerely, Winifred Bower, Myocum via Mullumbinby, NSW.

Dear OHGA,

What do I think of OPAC/AQIS?

I have been following the discussion surrounding the attempt by AQIS to formulate a regulation at law to adequately define for legal purposes the definition of the term "Organic" through the HERB GROWER over past months.

I know what we (or at least I ...) as inducted herbies mean by organic - and we still need a means of transmitting this onto the general public, clearly and succinctly so that they will hear and understand and not be misled by

erroneous working in advertising campaigns by slick advertising companies.

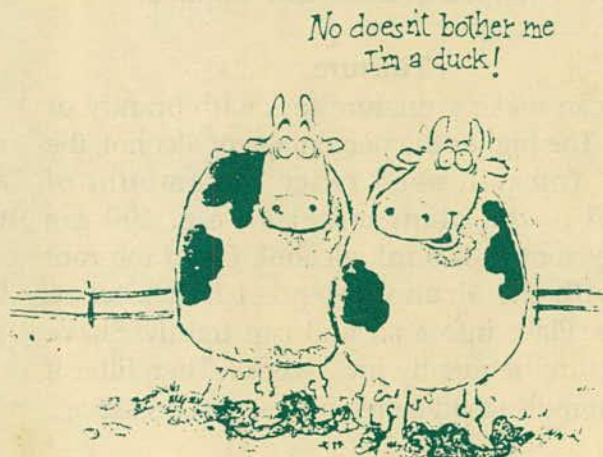
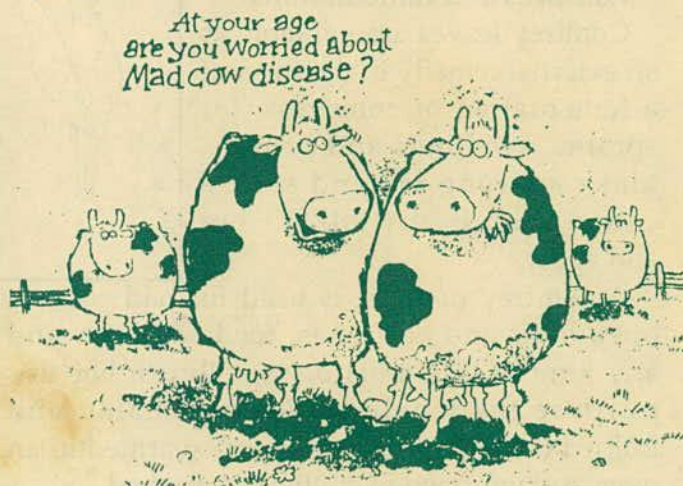
It is important that this information be obtainable from a body which is able to be seen as impartial but yet able to hear powerful lobby groups such as your/ourselves who have their fingers in the dirt at the working end of organic production.

The issue is too important to be lost to emotive despair. History will show that the way to achieve socially (for everyone) acceptable change whilst working with Government is to allow the passing of at least a very ordinary piece of legislation on their terms allowing for as much input as possible from people like us; and then it will be much easier to wring change from something which exists than to make adjustments to something which may never even become possible.

The politics of gaining the desired end result is not about being seen to be the winner of the war but about achieving what everyone thinks is impossible without them even knowing who did it and how it was done.

And by the way, if Tony is ever motorcycling in this neck of the woods I would be happy to show him some of the choice motorcycling roads about the southern Great Dividing Range in the N-E of Victoria.

Regards, Liz Olle, HerbLink, Milawa, Vic 3678.



WHAT TO DO WITH COMFREY

COMFREY (*symphytum officinale*) , is also called Knitbone, Knitback, Bruisewort, Gum Plant, Ass Ear, Slippery Root and a few other names in Saxon and other ancient languages. It is a member of the Borage family and originates in Europe and the cooler parts of Asia.

It is an erect plant, rough and hairy all over, with a branched rootstock which is white, fleshy and juicy internally. Comfrey likes to grow in partial shade and a moist soil. It can easily be propagated by root cuttings or division.

Many of you, I'm sure, grow some comfrey plants in your garden, and use the leaves for composting, as a soil enriching mulch or for making liquid manure. There are many more uses for the plant, both medicinally and cosmetically.

Poultices and fomentations

Comfrey leaves are valuable as an external remedy in the form of a fomentation or compress, for sprains, swellings and bruises. Make a strong tea and soak a cotton cloth in it while it's hot and apply.

A comfrey poultice is used for bad cuts, to open boils and abscesses, for bad ulcers and any kind of inflammatory swellings. For this purpose the whole leaves are beaten and pulped (I use a meat tenderiser), warmed in an oven and wrapped in cloth, then applied.

Tincture

You can make a tincture too, with brandy or vodka. The higher the percentage of alcohol, the better. You will need twice the amount of alcohol to the plant material, e.g. 100 grs comfrey root to 200 ml. alcohol. Chop the root and, with the alcohol, blend it in a kitchen blender. Place into a jar and cap tightly. Shake the tincture frequently for 2 weeks. Then filter it (I use non-bleached coffee filters) and preserve

in tight, light-resistant containers out of the sun and excessive heat. The tincture has long been used in lung troubles and coughs; and for internal haemorrhages of all sorts, sometimes with the addition of witchhazel extract.

Of course the leaves used to be taken internally in other ways as well, as a vegetable or a tea, and as a syrup. In some parts of Ireland, comfrey was eaten as a cure for defective circulation and aenemia.

Comfrey roots, together with chicory and dandelion roots were also used to make a 'coffee', a perfectly acceptable substitute and much healthier than the real thing it was thought, as the plant contains vitamins and minerals such as A, B1, B12, nicotinic acid, C, E, calcium, iron, manganese and phosphorus.

Comfrey oil

Chop comfrey leaves and cover with almond or apricot kernel oil in a double boiler and heat up. Simmer for a couple of hours. Leave overnight and strain.

Or cover the chopped comfrey leaves with almond or apricot kernel oil in a tightly sealed jar and let sit for two weeks in a warm place, shaking every day. Strain.

Use this oil to clean your face, or for dry skin on any part of the body,

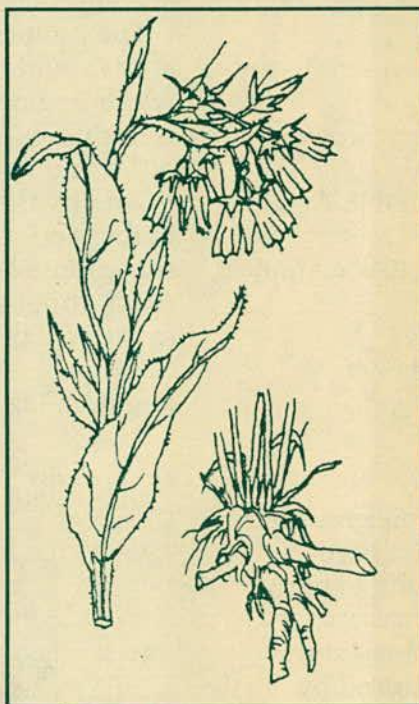
Comfrey ointment

Here you go one step further after you've made the oil. You will now heat up the oil again and add about one third of beeswax. Strain while hot into a container.

A less messy way for use on dry skin, for bruises, rheumatic pains and abscesses.

Comfrey face pack for dry skin

Chop a handful of comfrey leaves and blend



with half a cup of hot water. Strain and apply the juice to your clean face. Leave for 15 minutes and rinse with tepid water.

Comfrey face mask

Blend a fresh large comfrey leaf with a tblsp. honey and wheatgerm to make a paste. Apply to the face and leave on for 15 minutes. Wash off with lukewarm water. This paste can be kept in a refrigerator for up to a week.

Comfrey hair rinse

Use roots and leaves, cover with water and simmer for half an hour. Strain and use as a last rinse after shampooing. This hair rinse can be kept in the fridge for a week, but should be warmed up for use.

- Elle

References:

Mrs. M. Grieve, *A Modern Herbal*

James Green, *The Herbal Medicine-Maker's Handbook*

Pot-Pourri, March 1995

JAPAN LAND OF CO-OPS

Rick Ada, an agricultural economist based in Toowoomba, recently spent two years in northern Japan, where he studied Japanese business and customs, in particular the Japanese Consumer Co-operative Movement.

At the NASAA/BFA conference in Lismore in September he was one of the speakers. This is a summary of his interesting talk.

In Japan, Co-ops are the largest retail bodies. They provide for every need in life, from food, housing and insurance to funerals. While major department stores are losing customers and profit, co-ops are flourishing and expanding. Even the smallest village has at least one co-op.

In 1970, there were 2 million co-op members. That number has grown to 17 million at the present time. They belong to one of the 650 co-ops throughout Japan. The membership consists mainly of women, from the middle and upper classes.

The co-ops have a very democratic structure. Every member has a say in how the co-op is run, what food, goods and services are offered, and there is a very close link between the producer (mainly the farmer) and the consumer. It is common for co-op members to take a trip out to the country to inspect the farms where the food and meat they buy is produced.

The basic philosophy behind the system is to improve the quality of life, to be autonomous and to co-operate with others.

This co-operation factor is very important to them, as they have great concern for their own and each other's health and welfare, and for the freshness and safety of their food (hence the regular farm inspections by members). The co-op also champions consumer issues, organises anti-nuclear rallies, and checks out who they do business with, as a strong sense of morality is demanded in every day to day business dealing.

Members put together their food orders from catalogues. They get faxed or computered through to the office which organises the distribution centres. Orders are then delivered door to door by the co-op trucks. This whole process takes less than 24 hrs!

Co-ops also own their own stores. These are rapidly growing in size and becoming more competitive, with the co-op's putting out their own brand names. Members believe their co-op's products are better and safer than those of the others.

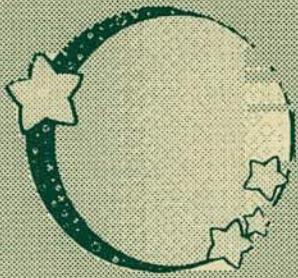
Co-ops are now also sponsoring development of organic agriculture and are funding organic fertiliser plants.

Rick Ada had originally promoted his speech as "A market opportunity for Organic Produce". Unfortunately he could give us no marketing information beyond his co-op talk.

After the speech a Japanese lady from Adelaide stood up and told us that it will be very difficult to get into the market in Japan, as they're extremely paranoid about Australian produce. It actually sounds as if they're paranoid about any food they can't see being grown. Maybe they're right. Not for them the blind faith, or indifference, in the practices of food producers, and the food they produce, that we have here in Oz. Smart people! We could certainly take a leaf from their book.

-Elle





GARDENING BY THE MOON

by
Elle Fikke-Rubin



NOVEMBER

15-21 As this is the Moon's last quarter, these days are best spent cultivating, weeding and making green manures (comfrey, valerian leaf, chamomile, nettles and other herbs or weeds in a bin of water, either loose or suspended in a hessian or cheesecloth bag; let sit for a week or so, covered, and dilute to water your plants with). Water your citrus trees well, trip prune flowering bushes and perennial flowers and throw some mosquito netting over your stonefruit trees. I have tried all sorts of concoctions to ward off the dreaded fruitfly and have come to the realisation that netting is the only organic method that works! Completely cover your trees and secure with bricks. Shadecloth will work too, if you don't mind your fruit coming on some weeks later than normal.

22-23 New Moon, days off.

24-28 Time to plant or sow leafy annuals: basil, borage, dill, rocket, sage (even though it's really a perennial, but in our hot area best treated as an annual), parsley, lettuces, celery, silver beet and chinese cabbages, to mention a few. As annuals are expected to grow from seed to harvest in only a short period of time, it goes without saying that they like fertile conditions with frequent waterings of liquid manures, seaweed fertiliser or the like.

29 First quarter, no work.

30 Seedbearing annual and flower time. In go beans, peas, tomatoes, melons, marrows, squashes, pumpkins, sweet corn, zucchini's, more dill and basil, chamomile, nasturtiums and a host of other flowers.

DECEMBER

1-6 More days to plant flowers and seedbearing

annuals.

7 Full Moon.

8-14 A long week to plant, sow or propagate root crops, perennial herbs and other plants, and to plant bushes and trees, if it's not too dry and hot.

15 Last Quarter.

16-21 Days for odd jobs, such as feeding up some beds or checking for bugs. If you're in an area of high summer rainfall and consequently lots of high weeds, you may want to put some mulch down. This is also a good time to prepare new planting areas by staking out new beds, watering them well, applying some organic fertiliser like Organic Life and dolomite, and covering the lot with black plastic. Guaranteed to kill all the weeds underneath and bring in earthworms.

23-28 I'm sure that only the most dedicated gardeners are going to want to work in the garden these days; for you it's leafy annuals time. For the rest of you, have a great, restive and festive Christmas!

29 First Quarter.

30-31 Seedbearing and flowering annuals days.

JANUARY

1-5 HAPPY NEW YEAR! If you have the energy, here's more days to work with annual flowering and seedbearing plants. Calendulas will help remediate bad soil, french or african marigolds keep unwanted soil-inhabiting pests away and sunflowers will really improve your soil and look stunning too. Sunflower seeds are very nutritious internally, and ground up and mixed with milk (for dry skin) or yoghurt (for oily skin) make an excellent face pack.

6 Full Moon, take the day off.

7-13 Time for perennials, rootcrops, and trees



and bushes. There are some beautiful perennial herbs that can be planted now. Take tansy, for instance, with its long lasting yellow buttons. It also has a little-known cosmetic use. Tea made of the leaves and flowers is excellent for skin blemishes and pimples.

And *Tagetes lucida* or what we call winter tarragon, that old Aztec herb which was used by those ancient people as a tea for ceremonial purposes. Outside of ceremonies it tastes delicious too.

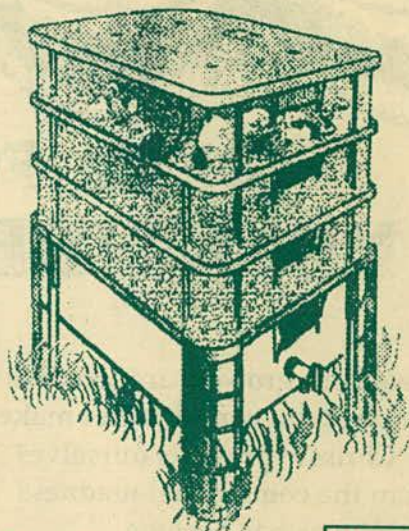
Feverfew flowers all through the summer and is now an acknowledged cure for migraines. Perhaps you could also plant some pyrethrum. It too looks good and by picking and drying the flowers you have an all purpose insecticide handy at all times. And don't forget those beautiful scented geraniums, whose dried foliage is so wonderful in potpourri's. A tea made out of them is also great as a face wash or hair rinse.

14 Last Quarter.



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IDEAS FOR HERBAL YULETIDE PRESENTS

On the whole we herb growers are sensible and creative people, who would rather make the obligatory Chrissie presents ourselves than take part in the commercial madness that Christmas has become.

And we can, easily. Below are some ideas that have stood the test of time.



HERBAL HONEYS

Pour the required amount of honey in a saucepan and heat until it becomes liquid. Add the washed and dried fresh herbs or flowers of your choice, and simmer very gently for 10 minutes. Leave for 24 hrs in a warm place.

The next day the honey and contents are heated again, and the liquid poured through a sieve into small jars. These are decorated with a pretty label or tag.

Some suitable herbs and/or flowers are: roses, lavender, thyme, carnations, rosemary, marjoram or mint.

Use one cupful of herbs/flowers to 500 grs of honey.



HERBAL VINEGARS AND OILS

A good herbal vinegar takes about three weeks to mature. Pick the herbs of your choice, wash and dry them and let them wilt for a few hours. You'll need about two cupfuls to a liter of vinegar. White wine vinegar will show your herbs off best.

Fill a container with the herbs and vinegar and set them in a cool place for about three weeks. After that time, sieve the herbs out and bottle the vinegar.

Now it's time to select some really good looking herbs and flowers to float in your vinegar bottle.

Suitable herbs are basil, oregano, rosemary, thyme, tarragon, mint, lemonpeel, parsley, dill, lemon thyme, chillies, nasturtiums, chives. Purple basil will give the vinegar a lovely pink colour. The

vinegar can be kept for quite a while.

Not so the herbal oils, which should be used within a month of making them. Olive or safflower oil, or the nutty tasting Aussie macademia oil, are very suitable oils for the purpose. Add at least 10% of wheatgerm oil. Its high Vit E content will keep your oil from going rancid. The basic procedure is the same as that for the vinegar, and the same herbs can be used. There have been problems with garlic in oil, so even though it tastes wonderful, leave it out.



COSMETIC VINEGARS

Floral vinegars, such as rose or lavender vinegars, are also a good astringent for oily skin. In a small bottle mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of distilled water and 1 tbsp of floral vinegar.

A face cleanser is made by mixing and bottling 2 tbsp lavender vinegar and 1 cup of rosewater.

A herbal conditioning vinegar rinse for hair is made by mixing the following herbs: 2 tbsp each of marigold and chamomile flowers, $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp each of orange peel, lemon peel and comfrey root. Heat and pour on the herbs 2 cups of apple cider vinegar. Shake vigorously and put away in a cool dark place for 10 days. Shake every day and at the end of the 10 days, strain and bottle.

This rinse is perfect to neutralise the alkalinity of shampoos, and is used by diluting 2 tbsp with 1 cup of warm water. It is equally good as a face freshener.



AFTER SHAVE LOTION

You need approx. 5 tbsp of rosepetals or other sweet smelling flower petals, 4 tbsp sage leaves, 2 tbsp rosemary leaves, 1 cup apple cider vinegar and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of rosewater.

Place the herbs in a glass jar and pour the heated vinegar over them. Cap the jar and shake it once a day for 10 days. Strain the vinegar out and pour the rosewater over the herb dregs. Shake well and strain

out. Add to the vinegar.

POTTED HERBS

This may sound tame, but you could really make someone without a herb garden very happy by giving them a pot with combined herbs.

For someone who is into Italian food, plant one up with basil, oregano, thyme and garlic chives. For a fish lover combine dill, tarragon and lemongrass.

I'm sure you can think of other combinations.

A mother with young children would love an aloe vera plant to use on sunburns.

DRIED COOKING HERBS

Jars with dried herbs will also be very welcome. Pick your herbs in the morning and wash and dry them well. The quickest method of drying them is in the oven. Place the herbs on foil, in which you have pricked some holes, on an oven rack in your oven. Set it on the lowest possible temperature, and leave the door slightly ajar.

Most herbs will take about two hours to dry. Check them regularly; you may need to turn them. When dry, you will need to strip the leaves off the stems and perhaps crush them a bit.

You can bottle single herbs or combinations of them. Design a label using the name of your farm.

HERB SYRUPS

Herb syrups or cordials can be both a nice way of taking a medicine or a lovely summer drink. Syrups and cordials are made in the same way. You heat about 2 kg of sugar with 1 liter of water and simmer it until the sugar has dissolved. Then you add the herb(s) of your choice. Mint or lemongrass make a great summer cooler, while lavender is just a lovely tasting and relaxing drink. You can use roses too, and thyme, in which case it becomes a cough syrup as well. Whatever herb you use, it's guaranteed to be healthy and taste great!

POTPOURRI'S

Everyone expects herb growers to be into potpourri's and you may not want to disappoint them.

There are several ways of drying your herbs and flowers for potpourri's. There is the borax-salt method, the silica gel, the glycerine, but most of us don't have that much time, and it's almost

Christmas already, so into the oven they go. See above for the oven-drying method.

After the herbs and flowers are dried, they need to be mixed and the mix matured for about six weeks, with an ample addition of orrisroot as a scent fixative. This is available from most healthfood shops or chemists. You will need about half a cup of orris root to 10 cups of herbs and flowers.

If you don't have enough time to let the scents in your herb and flower mix mature and mingle for the six weeks required, you could of course take a shortcut. After all, those prolific potpourri manufacturers do the same. They add synthetic smells to their mixes of material, which is about all you can call it, as their practice is to *bleach* all the wonderful flowers, leaves and nuts they buy all over the world, and then to *dye* them in their theme colours!

We can do a lot better by adding essential oils to enhance the scent of our mixes. So combine all your herbs and flowers after they're dried, add the right quantity of orris root and add some essential oils. A few drops is all you need. Spice it up, if you want, with cloves, cinnamon, allspice or the like. Gumnuts, wood shavings and barks will also add to the character of your mix.

Some fragrant combinations are:

- roses, mint, cloves, cinnamon and allspice.
- lavender, lemon peel, peppermint, sweet basil and rosemary
- roses, lavender, lemon verbena and cinnamon
- rose geranium, cinnamon, lemon verbena, thyme, bay leaves, lavender flowers.

HERB WREATHS

You can use any number of herbs for wreaths. You need a spool of medium-gauze wire. Make small bunches of your herbs, about 20 cm in length. Bind the first bunch firmly to one end of the wire, leaving about 5 cm to spare. Tie the second bunch so that it covers the stems of the first one, and continue like this until you reach the circle size that you want. Tie the ends of the wire together. For the best effect, use a good variety of herbs. A red chili stuck in here and there will make it look very Christmassy.

- Elle



The OHGA Committee wish you all a great Christmas and a wonderful 1996



THIS AND THAT

APHIDS LOSE THEIR TASTE FOR CABBAGES

Sap sucking aphids could soon lose their taste for cabbages, cauliflowers, sprouts, broccoli and other brassica. The cabbage aphid, *Brevicoryne brassicae*, spoils hundreds of millions dollars worth of vegetable crops each year, despite the use of powerful pesticides by farmers. Now researchers in Britain have identified a wild relative of these crops that resists the aphid.

The wild relative, which grows in mediterranean countries, makes a protein that puts the aphids off their food. The researchers hope to transfer this trait to crops, either through conventional breeding or genetic engineering. The wild relative, *Brassica fruticulosa*, is edible and should therefore produce edible hybrids if crossed with commercial crops.

Bob Ellis and Rosemary Cole of Horticulture Research International, a group of independent research institutes, have already crossed *B. fruticulosa* with a commercial strain of broccoli. Later this year they hope to find out whether the hybrid is resistant to aphids. They have traced the plant's resistance to a protein which appears to work by blocking the aphid's taste receptors. The insect concludes that it has landed on an inedible plant and flies away.

The researchers are confident that the resistance gene will pose no danger to consumers, because people in areas where *B. fruticulosa* grows garnish their salads with leaves from the plant. "it's one of the most commonly collected wild food plants in the mediterranean" says Ellis.

- New Scientist

HEMP TO BE TRIALLED BY UNE ARMIDALE

A small hemp trial plot at a site near Armidale is the only one allowed by the NSW Government this year.

UNE's application to grow industrial low THC hemp was recently approved. NSW Ag minister, Richard Amery, expects initial results to be available early in 1996, after which further applications will be invited and considered. Several government departments, ie NSW Ag, Land and Water and the Police department, have formed a joint committee to

develop guidelines for the crop.

Industrial hemp is allowed only a low THC content. The Armidale trial plot will therefore be under strict security and regular tests will be undertaken to make sure that the hemp does not exceed the allowed percentage.

HEMP, the lobby group for legalisation of all hems, doubts that the low THC varieties can be grown effectively. Matthew Fagan, from the Southern Cross University in Lismore, says: "I fully support the trials of hemp, but am concerned that corporate agribusiness will take over what we see as a community-based crop. And there are problems with low THC hemp. THC is the plant's natural sunscreen and insecticide. In arid areas low THC reduces the plant's ability to survive."

SEXY ODOURS

Did you know that homey odours are sexy? The smell of pumpkin pie, doughnuts, licorice and lavender significantly increase blood flow to the penis - the basis of an erection. These odours are more effective than any perfume.

Most potent: a combination of pumpkin pie and lavender, which increased penile blood flow by 40%!

- The Herbal Connection 4/5

LEAVE ROOTBALLS ALONE

Until now we were told by master gardeners to break apart the rootballs of rootbound plants before transplanting them.

The USA National Gardening magazine did some tests whereby gardeners broke apart the rootballs of half of the plants that were seriously rootbound, and left the other half alone. In all cases the plugs whose roots were left intact grew better than the ones that were split open or untangled.

Researchers have studied the tendency of roots to circle around the sides of containers rather than growing all through the soil mass. When transplanted, annual vegetables and flowers can quickly generate new growing points all along the roots at the edge of the rootball, and will begin exploring the new garden soil almost immediately if the ground is moist and in good contact with the rootbound mass.



Entangling may be a good idea for shrubs and trees since these have permanent roots that may choke each other as they expand over the years, but for annuals it only slows the plant down.

- National Gardening March 1995

BRUSH YOUR SEEDLINGS

Plants grown indoors, even under very good light conditions, tend to stretch and become a little tender, partly because they are not exposed to wind stress. Now researchers have found that brushing your seedlings before they go out will speed up the hardening-off process.

"I strongly recommend that gardeners brush their transplants," says Joyce Latimer, a plant physiologist at the Georgia Experiment Station in Griffin. "It is the safest kind of hardening you can do, and the nice thing is that you can see the plants repond in two days. A brushed plant is shorter, stronger and more resistant to wilting. The leaves will develop closer together, and be smaller and a darker green. We've measured the growth, and brushed plants put on the same weight as unbrushed plants, but everything is more concentrated."

Latimer says you should start brushing as soon as the cotyledons (the two initial leaves) are fully expanded, even before there are any true leaves. Use a sheet of typing paper, a cardboard tube or a wooden dowel - something wet leaves won't stick to - and quickly brush the tops of a flat of plants, roughly 40 strokes in a minute and a half. Ideally, do this twice a day until the plants are ready to go outside.

Be careful with plants like peppers that hold their growing point above the top leaves.

-National Gardening March 1995

PRICED TO SELL

How you price can have a big impact on your sales, according to a US magazine. Here are some strategies that can boost sales:

- * Sell multiple products as one. Three for 99 cents sells more than one for 33 cents.
- * Drop the zeros. \$35.00 seems higher than \$35.
- * A dollar or two below an even round price sells well. Instead of selling a plant for \$20, try \$19 or even \$19.95.
- * A dollar or two above the round number sells poorly. Oddly enough, \$33 may seem like a better deal to your customers than \$31 or \$32.
- * Spell out the savings twice. If you advertise an item at 50% off, also show the original

price and the sale price.

- * "Buy one and get one free" seems like a better deal than "half-price", which makes items seem old or stale to customers.

- The Herbal Connection, 4/5

GINSENG INFO

If you need ginseng info you can get a primer from Cornell Coop Ext of Greene Co, HCR 3, Box 906, Cairo NY 12431 for U\$2. Ask for *American Ginseng Production in New York State*.

If you have a modem, try PANAX, an Internet discussion group sponsored by the British Columbia Ministry of Ag, Fisheries and Food. To join PANAX, send an e-mail message to: mailser@cariboo.bc.ca. In the body of the message, type the one-lined command:

subscribe panax Yourfirstname Yourlastname
To send a message to all group members, address it to:

panax@cariboo.bc.ca

For additional information about PANAX, contact Al Oliver, Provincial Ginseng Specialist, BC Min of Ag. email: aoliver@galaxy.gov.bc.ca

This message is again from our friends at The Herbal Connection who set up their own HERBNET. They are obviously completely at home with all this, but I must admit that I approach it with a bit of trepidation and am stalling on the whole Internet thing. Still, I'll get there and before you know it our HERB GROWER will be out there in cyberspace!

RURAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

This year's Rural Woman of the Year Robyn Tredwell of WA (although born in Murwillumbah and widely travelled) won her award for successfully revegetating her devastated Birdwood Downs property of 2000 ha., near Derby in the Kimberley region.

A trained nurse, midwife and neo-natal intensive carer, she has travelled the world to gather expertise in tropical plants of medicinal significance.

She successfully developed ecologically sustainable farming practices in the harsh Kimberley landscape. Her once barren farm now includes tropical pastures, hay production, perennial seed production, tropical fruit and livestock. The property is now practically self-sufficient. She achieved all this without a bank's backing! Ms Tredwell runs the property with the help of her eight-year old son, and employs casual staff when funds allow.

Living with only her son, she says that he has "the whole of the Kimberleys around me" but feels that her job of revegetating the land is never-ending.

What a woman!

FRENCH CONSIDERED POISONING GREENPEACE CREW

French secret agents wanted to inject Greenpeace anti-nuclear militants with a virus able to trigger diarrhea or yellow fever a decade ago, to prevent them from sailing to the south Pacific, the French newspaper *Le Monde* reported in September.

The paper, quoting sources close to the country's intelligence services, said the 1985 project was ultimately scuttled in favour of electronic jamming of Greenpeace communications, once they reached France's nuclear testing site. A Defence Ministry spokesman said his office had no immediate comment.

The virus project was aimed against the crew of the M.V. Greenpeace when it was docked in Curaçao in the Dutch West Indies in September 1985, *le Monde* said.

The regional French intelligence station chief and his local agent had arranged with accomplices in the local administration for the Greenpeace crew to be ordered to undergo inoculations on the pretext of new health regulations.

"A virus would have been inoculated which would have provoked serious diarrhea, yellow fever and delayed the ship's departure" the newspaper wrote.

The agents finally bribed local officials to delay delivery of the ship's communications equipment, enabling the French to study the equipment and later hamper the ship's transmissions, *Le Monde* said.

- *International Herald Tribune* 12-9-95

PESTICIDE STUDY

The Australian Medical Association has called for a government funded study into the effects of pesticides on public health at Gunnedah in n.w. NSW. According to AMA president David Weedon the study is needed because of the incidence of skin disorders and fatigue related illness in

the area. The AMA said that Gunnedah residents had identified aerial spraying of cotton crops as the main cause of the health problems.

The Northern Star, 30-9-95

DEMETER LOOSES CASE

Alex Podolinsky phoned in a horrible story. DEMETER'S principal nursery in Germany got a new neighbour, a nursery which raised genetically engineered seedlings. Upon finding that cross pollination occurred between the two nurseries, Demeter took their neighbours to court and lost!! Is there a future for organics?

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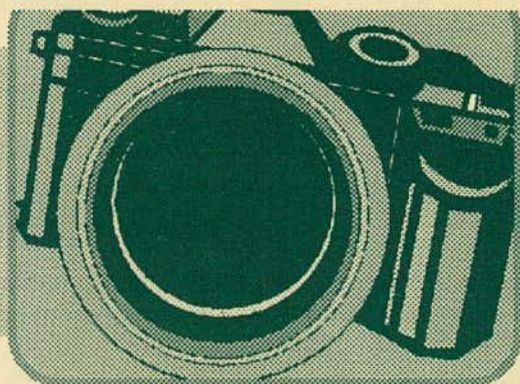
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PHOTOGRAPHIC TIPS FOR AUSSIE CONDITIONS

BY PHILIP MOORE



The article in the July/August issue prompted me to make a few suggestions for taking photographs under our harsh Australian light. These tips have been gained from talking to professional photographers over the last couple of years, and taking photographs myself for commercial use.

BEST TIME TO SHOOT

A. Sunny days

If the day is bright and glary, the only times to shoot are between dawn and 9:00 am, and between 3:00 pm and dusk. The strong sunlight in the middle of the day washes the colour out of sides and makes the photo appear flat.

The morning light is much preferable to afternoon light, as afternoon light will give a golden glow to the photo. The absolute best time to shoot is just as the sun is coming over the horizon in the morning. The texture in the foliage is best then. You also get interesting light contrasts from the light casting across the plants from the side rather than glaring down from on high.

B. Overcast days

You can shoot all day on an overcast day, providing the clouds are not too low and dark or threatening precipitation.

The very best light for outdoor photography is when you have a high, light cloud cover. The light is very soft and you get good contrasts.

DARK NOOKS AND CRANNIES

Plants such as parsley, dill, fennel, wormwoods with their finely dissected leaves, have dark nooks and crannies which are not obvious to the human eye. However, when they are photographed these nooks end up as dark spots all over the photographs. This gives the photo a gloomy appearance.

FILL - IN FLASH

To illuminate these dark areas you need fill - in flash. The flash should not be used as full

power or it will wash out the colour. There are two ways to achieve the weaker light for a fill - in flash.

Firstly you can cover the flash with tissue paper. Experiment with a number of thicknesses until you get the right strength.

Secondly, you can buy a flash unit with variable power.

CLOSE-UP OR MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY

If you are planning to fill up the entire slide with one or two flowers or leaves, you may need a ring flash. Initially I thought a ring flash must have been a pair of jeans with the zipper in the back. The ring flash is doughnut shaped and screws onto the front of the lens. It will cast a uniform light over the subject and eliminate all dark nooks and crannies.

Using a single flash, especially the ring flash, will flatten out the photo and make it appear two dimensional.

BACK LIGHTING

The way to bring the three dimensional look into your photograph, is to use back or side lighting.

This can be achieved by having the source of light at the back or side of your subject. The source can be a board painted white or a hand held flash. If you are using a remote hand held flash, you will need a light sensor attached to the hand held flash which will make it go off automatically when the flash attached to your camera fires.

You can experiment with various angles and distances from the subject with your hand held flash. You can try starting at 60-90 cm away from the subject. With trial and error a front fill in flash combined with a back flash will give up a well-lit three dimensional photo.

MACRO LENS

A macro lens is reasonably essential for high quality up close work. Some of these accessories are expensive for the part-time photographer. I



have had success with second hand gear I have tracked down.

THE BLUES

Blue coloured flowers can give you the blues. When a blue colour is developed, it often comes up pink. Three stratagems were suggested to me to overcome this.

- A Shoot on a cloudy day
- B Shoot under a white umbrella
- C Use a filter

The first two methods did not work for me. However, using a HOYA 80B blue filter will definitely give you blue flowers. Don't forget to remove it before taking the next shot.

BRACKET YOUR SHOTS

If you are using a manual camera, you should bracket your shots. For example, if you select F stop 16 as the best stop, you should also do one either side at F stop 22 and F stop 11.

On the same day two totally different plants alongside each other may need totally different F stop settings to bring out their best. This is because plants reflect different amounts of light. Consider how much light a silver wormwood reflects compared to a purple basil or purple perilla.

CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GOODLINESS

The human eye does not register or object to a few spotty leaves or dead flowers. On a photograph they stand out like dogs dangly bits. They should be removed along with all distracting bits of debris in the background.

WHICH FILM

Films are designed for different jobs. For example, Kodak Ektachrome is at its best in the blue green colour range, whereas Kodachrome is at its best in the red and yellow colour range. A professional photographer highly recommends Fuji Velvia. I have had good results with Ektachrome 100.

PRACTISE AND RECORDING MAKE PERFECT

The only way to get to know your equipment is to record every shot you do. Make a note of the film used, the prevailing weather, settings on the camera and the type of lighting you used. You will soon develop a technique that works well for your camera.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

As we have quite a few new members, I'll give you the whole idea again.

We plan to go for a colour frontpage this year and are looking for photo's from you to put on it.

There are three categories in the competition:

- * herbs in the ground
- * herbal arrangement
- * herbs and people

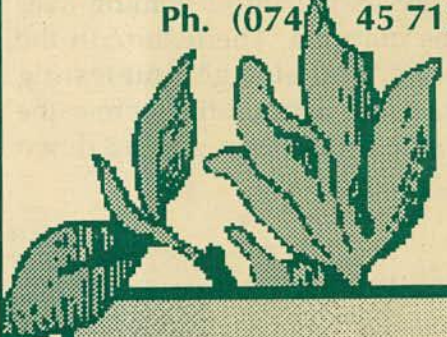
You can enter one or all of the categories, as many times as you like, but we won't be able to return the photo's to you so it's best to be selective. Please put your name, address and phone nr on the back of each entry.

The first prize winner of each entry wins one year's free membership to OHGA. Your membership fee will be returned to you. Even if you don't win, your photo may be used, with full credits to you of course.

The competition closes on Dec. 31. How's that for a date. Think you can manage it?

- Elle

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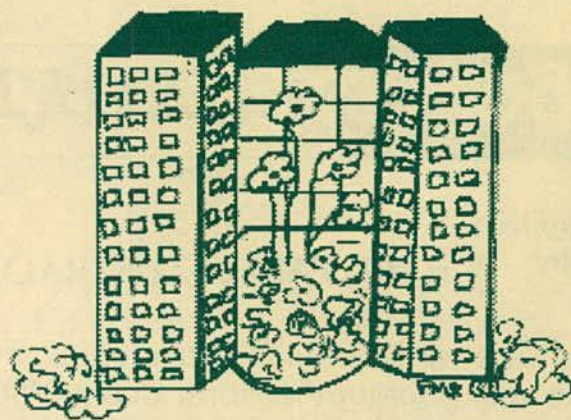
Leaving the city brings us back to earth with a thump

NEARLY five years ago, I harboured a dream of one-day living on a farm. Next month, that dream will become a reality. I will soon be departing this little haven in the Brisbane sky for a much lower, but more peaceful, hideaway in the Jiggi Valley. As this will be my last column written from the Big Smoke, I have been reminiscing about city life and which bits of it I will miss. Of all the cities throughout the world, this is one of the most beautiful to live in. But, when all is said and done, it is still a city. And the bit I will probably miss the most . . . is the noise.

Brisbane still virtually shuts down at night like a big country town. But, like every city, it is condemned daily to 24 hours of low, constant, metropolitan rumble. Sometimes it crescendos, sometimes it murmurs. Always it is there. The worst thing is that, after nine years, I have become desensitised to it. Even when we lived beside a railway line, it took only two months before the metallic clatter and "THUMP, THUMP, THUMP" of diesel freight trains was no more noticeable than the evening cicadas. (Of course, we never heard an evening cicada - even if they were there.) Even now, the constant traffic below my balcony has become second nature. Mind you, the odd hotbed-up Holden or a Harley-Davidson will still break through the fog. As does the "THUMP, THUMP, THUMP" of the bass speakers in a wound-up car stereo. (I figure it saves people the worry of hearing their high-octane engine blow up!)

Now that I know the effects a subtle sonic bloom has on plants, I wonder what the cacophony of a city does to its inhabitants in the long term? Probably sends them tone deaf. In fact, it has probably contributed to my own partial deafness. I can't hear people talk above any form of constant background noise. I lip-read in a crowded pub and no longer go near a disco. Admittedly, spending my youth in a very loud rock band didn't help. Nor did turning up my radio announcer's headphones full bore to "get in the mood for the show".

But the city must take some responsibility. The noise is everywhere. And city noises are so shrill. Take sirens. Day and night they wail, telling us the police, ambulance and fire brigades are out there saving our lives. They are probably forced to make such a racket so they don't clean up decibel-driven drivers or Walkman-challenged joggers. Sirens rate up there with screaming jet-airliners which over power our local squawking crows. They compare with the nightly cat shrieks which always set off a chain reaction of dog barking.



PADDOCK ON TOP

By KENRICK RILEY

And don't forget the electric technology we have been blessed with. The television has a sound frequency which can penetrate reinforced concrete. Although, maybe its tinny echo is seeping through the wall cracks wrought by the latest, appropriately named, Bang and Olufsen woofer innovation. (*I can't wait for when a woofer is one who works for food and wine!*) Again, it is the "THUMP, THUMP, THUMP" of low frequency sound waves which feel like they would demolish a brick building.

Sneaking into a shopping centre offers no respite. Musak crackles out of overhead speakers only to be interrupted by the unintelligible shrill of "Sharlene to checkout six please". Even the lift in my office building yaps away. "This lift is going up" it reminds me in case I am dead. Some lifts don't even have a real voice. Instead, they have a robotic version of Stephen Hawking computer-speak advising me nasally to "hab a nitz day". Outside, the Brisbane City Mall is littered with aging, born-again religious spruikers touting their mindless monologues as if surrounded by people who care. "THUMP, THUMP, THUMP" on whatever sacred hard-back is at hand. Nearby, young pharmacy sales assistants squeak their pre-pubescent vocals into a \$10 karaoke microphone while peddling their own type of snake-oil. Up at the legislative end of town, froth-mouthed screechers debate Question Time in the House. "THUMP, THUMP, THUMP" on the Parliament table.

And I am leaving all this. For what? For the rustle of breeze in a still dawn? For the sound of a seedpod settling on the roof? For the hush of water rippling down the creek? For the crackle of a cooking fire? For the magpies in the morning and the cicadas at sundown? For the sound of plants growing? Worms worming? Life?

Will I miss the city? Of course. But will I care? Not while the kangaroos in the top paddock are going "THUMP, THUMP, THUMP, THUMP, THUMP . . . !"



MARKET REPORT

compiled
by



HERB FARMS AUSTRALIA

The winter trading season has been very poor for the North Coast. With the advent of the early cold and the preceding drought, most growers lacked any volume of produce. The last two months has finally seen a return to the markets but with limited supply

Rosemary has been the number one seller. The dormant period has created the most beautiful supple new growth. Thousands of bunches of rosemary have left the north coast in the past weeks.

Demand was strong for all the Mediterranean varieties but supply was not possible. Thyme, lemon thyme, marjoram, oregano all received sales in

small volumes. Tarragon and Sage were not available and still remain scarce.

Those growers who took the advice and put in a crop of garlic, have been well rewarded. Certified organic garlic has fetched four times the price of the conventional market. Unfortunately, there was only a couple of hundred kilos available.

Fenugreek seed was a nice surprise with a major export order going to New Zealand.

Herbal tea manufacturers have been eager to secure summer crops. It looks like the forecasted chamomile crop will yield 1-2 tonnes this season. Lemon Balm, Lemon Grass and Mint are all strong performers.

Spring plantings should have included some valerian root, angelica root, burdock root, dandelion root, and scullcap.



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Requirements for marketing produce as



Commonly asked questions about marketing organic produce are answered by
Michael Burlace, Organic Farming Officer, NSW Agriculture

To be organic, produce must have been grown according to organic farming guidelines. Any handling must also have been according to organic guidelines.

There are two main differences between organic farming and conventional farming.

A competent organic farmer:

- chooses not to use any artificial chemicals
- integrates all of the management practices and approaches needed to make the farm sustainable and self-balancing.

So organic produce has been grown in a system which uses no artificial chemicals and which sets out to be sustainable.

Can I legally sell my produce as organic?

Yes, if it is organic as described as above. No, if it is not.

It is illegal to sell non-organic produce as organic. All food sold must be what is claimed on the label. If an inspector believes someone is selling produce as organic, which it is not, they can prosecute them. The retailer, wholesaler and farmer may be called upon to prove that it is organic.

There are various consumer protection acts, federal and state, under which people can be prosecuted, fined and/or jailed for labelling something as organic when it is not. Fines of up to \$20,000 tend to make cheating less attractive.

There is a national standard and a range of certifying organisations approved to certify to that standard. Produce does not need to be certified, but the standard is the most likely measure if you end up in the courts trying to prove you were doing the right thing. So it would be wise to comply with it even if you don't want to be certified.

Who keeps organic farmers honest?

Anyone who cheats by using chemicals while pretending to be farming organically is likely to be caught. Neighbours notice what is happening or the certifier finds out through random tests on produce or regular checks on farmers.

Organic certifiers inspect all certified farms, wholesalers and shops every year. Certified farmers normally sign a contract with the certifier. This spells out that the farmer will stick to the standards, keep suitable records and let the certifier know if they want to do anything which is not approved. The contract often also spells out that the farmer will improve rotations, plant more trees or take other steps to increase the farm's sustainability.

Produce from 5% of certified farms is tested at random each year and testing is also done where there is any suspicion of cheating. Testing cannot determine whether something is organic, but it can show which produce is **not organic**.

Must I be certified?

Only for export. No law says you must be certified to sell produce as organic if your produce remains in Australia. However, if you are certified, more markets are open to you because many traders prefer certified organic produce. Also, certification is becoming more important and is expected to eventually be compulsory for the local market.

Statutory declarations

Statutory declarations are often used by organic farming certification organisations to keep track of what certified farmers are doing.

If a certified farmer is cheating and is not



organic, they will be faced with the choice of admitting it on their yearly statutory declaration or making a false declaration.

If they admit that they are not in line with the contract, they may lose their certification or have some suitable restrictions put on it. If instead they make a false declaration, the consequences are greater: there are penalties for false declarations, including fines and jail terms.

Do organic farmers get around the law?

No. Being organic does not override obligations to tail tag cattle, manage noxious weeds and comply with pesticide laws. Organic farmers and their produce must meet all relevant local, state and federal requirements, just as other farmers and their produce must.

For example, if you have noxious weeds, you must take steps towards managing them adequately, even if it means using a herbicide and in the process destroying your farm's organic status. The same applies to plague locusts and cattle ticks. Organic farmers must comply with regulations on produce, such as for fruit grading.

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CERTIFIED OHGA MEMBERS

As a service to interested parties we will be printing a list of OHGA certified growers several times a year. This is the first one.
 Sorry, due to our limited space we were forced to adopt very small print.

Name Town	Phone	Certification Number	Grade
Leonie Valuntas & Jurgen Nymboida	Achilles 066 494210	192	A
Rosemary & David Ailken Tullera	066 282287	197	A
Bev & Paul Alcorn Woodford	074 961448	121	I
Fred Allott Glen Innes	067 344183	103	A
Robyn & Doug Andrews Whinn Whinn	066 895441	125	A
Pam Barkway Wamuran	074 966848	142	I
Gertrud Basten Cawongla	066 337030	230	I
Brackers & Partners Lismore	066 216397	229	I
Angela & John Brook Caboolture	074 964723	131	I
Jenni & Dave Carey Tullera	066 282031	119	A
Shilo & James Champion Mummulgun	066 847268	215	I
Deborah Chard & Jim Littlewood Eureka	066 884107	211	I
Jodie Crowther Marom Creek	066 298343	232	I
Spencer Day Clunes	066 291092	233	I
Gwen, Kerry & Allan Delacour Woodford	074 961706	136	I
Elizabeth Niki & Scott Douglas Mullumbimby	066 853323	102	A
Barbara Downes via Murwillumbah	075 909762	217	I
Richard Fisher Bowraville	065 644066	203	I
Vicki & Tony Flett Mummulgun	066 647272	246	I
Ied Forbes Fernvale	074 267641	242	I
Joan Denison & Greg Farney Brooklet	066 871181	182	A
Lyn & Rob Gale Via Alstonville	066 295053	214	I
Stanley Gibbs Clunes	066 291385	104	A
Joyce & Kevin Gordon Cambooya	078 961028	244	I
Del Grindrod Murwillumbah	066 726540	218	I
Debbie McIntosh & Lindsay Hancock Copmanhurst	066 473365	234	I
Diane Hannan via Billinudgel	066 801301	180	A
Carmel Harris & Jim MacPhail Murwillumbah	066 795308	167	A
Gille Mariussen & Philip Harris Wadeville	066 897489	221	I
Royce & James Hodges Midginbil via Uki	066 797094	202	A
Naomi & Julius Hoffstetter Tullera	066 282269	160	A
Carl Hughes Upper Corindi	066 481118	158	A

Name Town	Phone	Certification Number	Grade
Caroline Howells & Stanley Jackson Murwillumbah	066 793102	115	A
Ann-Louise & Howard Jullie Mount Mer	074 982156	137	I
David Kent Nashua	066 291580	216	I
Adele & Tom Kenyon Inverell	067 225854	226	I
Wendy & Paul Laird Dunoon	066 895228	207	I
Christopher Lane South Lismore	066 624168	227	I
Jim Linschke Tregearle	066 295119	170	A
Annette & Marlay Brown Walcha	067 777533	224	I
Paul Maroney via Casino	066 647242	249	I
Jesse McHugh Corndale	066 882102	100	A
David McIlraith Mullumbimby	066 848211	209	I
Liz & Bob McIntyre Georgina	066 888124	116	A
Bill McNally Wamuran	074 966970	144	I
Wolfgang Millerhuemer Terry Hills	02 4501640	208	I
Billy Monro & Roger Bosch Jingli	066 888372	237	I
Dianne & Philip Moore Warrerville	043 824600	238	I
Pam Morrow Lyndah	066 847497	107	A
Narelle & Garry Nielsen Pittsworth	078 932318	243	I
Gai & Bill Nixon Byron Bay	066 855528	120	A
Joni Norton & Denby Angus Mungay Creek	065 617364	247	I
Ann Marie & Chris Oertle Woodford	074 961723	124	I
Baden Offord & Chris MacFarlane Federal	066 849292	112	I
Katie & Phillip Brown Walcha	067 777504	223	I
Linda & Greg Paul Kyogle	066 333257	178	A
Alison & Amare Pearl Mullumbimby	066 845570	118	A
Permaculture Institute Tyalgum	066 793442	220	I
Alison Polley Morayfield	074 986642	146	I
Mary & Victor Puller Peachesler	074 949857	140	I
Moya & Brad Polls Lower Creek	065 678249	248	I
John Power Woodford	074 961319	134	I
Habette Presland Morayfield	074 987728	151	I
Ellie & Howard Rubin Clunes	066 591057	130	A



Name Town	Phone	Certification Number	Grade
Eric Sandberg Tullera	066 282037	175	A
Wilma & Rod Saw West Kempsey	065 669237	156	A
Maria Schmid Lindendale	066 295189	127	I
Joanne & Don Shollen Booyong via Lismore	088 878479	159	I
Vicki Smith McKees Hill	066 631513	241	I
Bob Smith-Vaughan Tyalgum	066 793126	239	I
Keith Spicer Inverell	067 223076	222	I
Gai Fuller & Greg Stewart Coraki	066 832591	210	I
Susan & Bernard Slijder Copmanhurst	066 473173	235	I
Julie, Robyn & Neville Stroud-Walls McLean's Ridge	066 281209	213	I
Christopher Sweet via Coull's Crossing	066 493575	231	I
Neal Taylor Bonallii	066 651266	161	A
Dianne & Stewart Thompson The Channon	066 888131	138	A
Carla Vanlebeek & Roy Metcalf Castino	066 641389	225	I
Magda Verbeek & Alister Janetzki Tucki	066 298413	117	A
Laurel Waddell via Castino	066 647265	240	I
Sharon & Greg Wallwork Wyarrallah	066 298200	113	A
Peter Ward Rock Valley	066 337056	219	I

Ann & John Waters Toowoomba	076 304489	245	I
Sue & Peter Webb Upper Copmanhurst	066 473389	236	I
Jan & Bill Webster Tullera	066 282358	139	A
Peter White Clayfield	07 3578217	212	I
Max & David Walcombe via Kyogle	066 331357	228	I
Chris Withell Kyogle	066 333124	169	A
Darryl Wright Morayfield	074 987997	145	I



Notes:

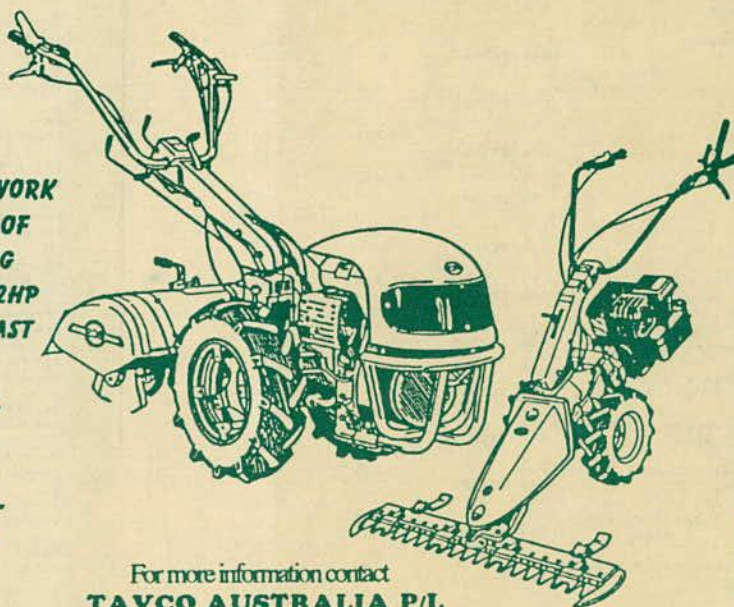
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Toowoomba "Home of Herbs" wins garden prizes

Discovering the magic of herbs is growing in popularity with the general public, according to Greenridge Botanicals' Public Relations Manager, Mary MacDonald.

This was shown to be the case during Toowoomba's recent Carnival of Flowers celebrations when around 1000 people visited Greenridge's "Home of Herbs".

Greenridge scooped the pools by winning two prizes; one for their display herb gardens and another for their herballly decorated horses and wagon in the street procession.

Visitors to the herb gardens could undertake either a self-guided tour or a tour conducted by a horticulturalist. The tour explained how the herbs were grown and their many benefits and uses.

This includes how to use herbs for the relief of common ailments; how to add flavour and excitement to cooking and how to repel insects from the garden.

Greenridge's "Home of Herbs" has a diverse selection of arts and crafts, as well as herbal medicines and potted herbs for sale.

The recently established cafe has proven popular with all age groups with healthy, delicious snacks containing herbs available, along with exciting herbal cocktails and freshly prepared juices.

If you are interested in discovering the magic of herbs in a beautiful, natural environment, call Mary on 008 016 061 or visit Greenridge's "Home of Herbs" located at 17 Freighter Avenue, Toowoomba on Queensland's Darling Downs.

ACADEMIC CALLS FOR MEGA - COMPOSTING.

A Flinders University researcher has called on Australia to embrace composting on a grander scale to help clean up the nation's soils and waterways.

Biotechnology lecturer Nick McClure said while many Australians were glad to throw kitchen scraps into a compost bin to do their bit for the environment, governments and industry had not followed the international trend to bioremediation or largescale composting.

Dr McClure says in Europe and North America the preferred option for dealing with soils and waterways contaminated with organic pollutants is to break the pollutants down.

"In other words, they clean up the soil or water, rather than simply writing it off as unusable," he said.

"The process is certainly more complex than dealing with vegetable scraps, but the principles are the same."

Dr McClure says bioremediation involves engineering natural processes to enhance and speed up the breakdown which could involve aeration or introducing nutrients to the soil or groundwater, to encourage the growth of bacteria.

To further research into the process Flinders university will soon establish a pilot bioremediation plant in Adelaide to conduct trials. Work in other countries is focused on the use of fungi to break down very complex pollutants.

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HERB GROWER BACK ISSUES STILL AVAILABLE:

MARCH-APRIL 1993

Indian Plants to fight AIDS; the Do's and Don'ts of Composting; Starting herbs from seeds.

MAY-JUNE 1993

Valerian as a cash crop; Herbal teas for winter; Chervil.

JULY-AUGUST 1993

Soil deficiencies and how to fix them, part 1; H.E.M.P.; Scullcap, a promising medicinal; Producing thyme as a ground cover.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1993

Soil deficiencies and how to fix them, part 2; Dandelions as a cash crop; Grower Hints, how to improve your chives harvest.

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1994

Aromatherapy; Mulching, which materials are best; Menopausal Years; Agrimony, an easy to grow medicinal.

MAY-JUNE 1994

Herbal first aid, easy to find remedies; Homoeopathic first aid, part 1; Organic fertilizers; Snail farming; How to prepare a herb sample; Labelling of products.

JULY-AUGUST 1994

Garlic, the magic cure-all; Homoeopathic first aid continued; Paper works; OHGA survey.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1994

Cultivation, how it affects the soil (which implements are best); Green manures..

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1995

Liquid Fertiliser, what, how and where; Seeds, the Multinational Conspiracy; Arnica, a proposition for Australian herb growers; Lantana, biological control.

MARCH-APRIL 1995

Bio-Dynamic Sprays, how and when to use them; Seeds, the Multinational Conspiracy part 2; Ten Reasons to buy Organic, centrefold poster; Organic Survey.

MAY-JUNE 1995

Serious concerns about herbal oils, the need for caution; HEMP, what every farmer needs to know; Sonic Bloom, a revolution in food production; What's Happening to Organics, by Alex Podolinsky.

JULY-AUGUST 1995

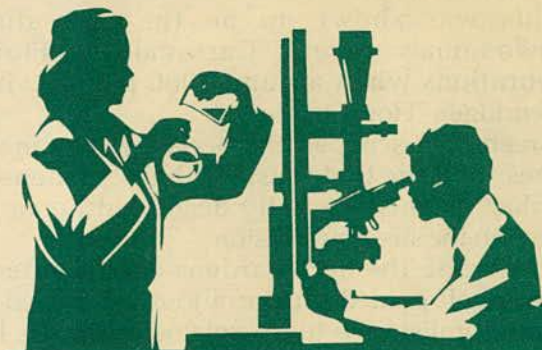
Sowing extra fine seeds, how to overcome the problems involved; Taking perfect pictures of your plants; Sewage sludge, is it permitted in Organics?; Toxic Alert, do be a polluter.

If you are interested in any of these issues, please order them by post, enclosing \$2 and 50 c. postage per copy ordered. Write to:
**Editor of OHGA, P O Box 6171
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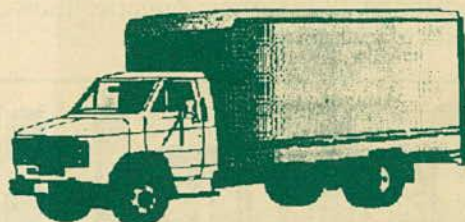
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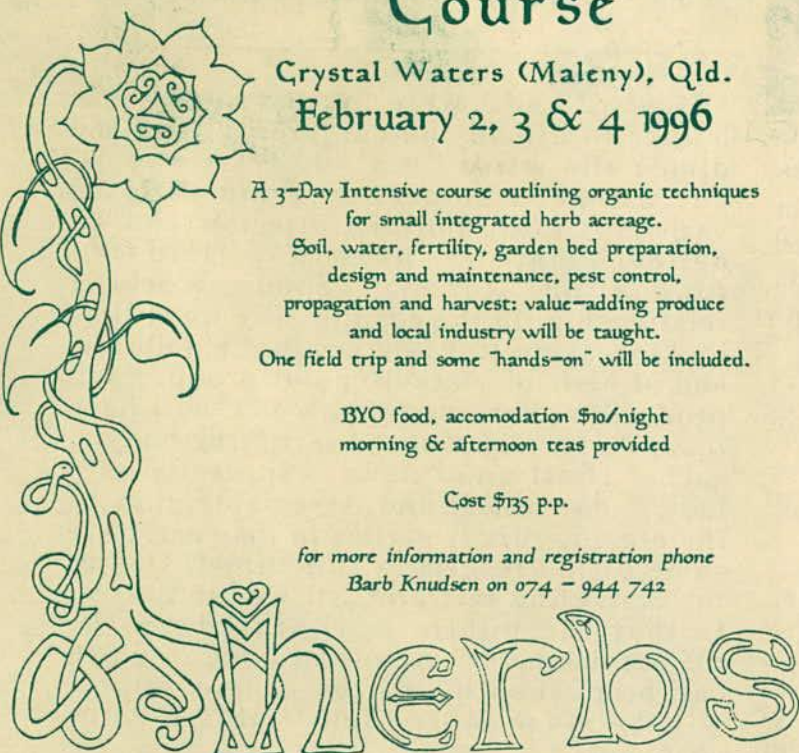
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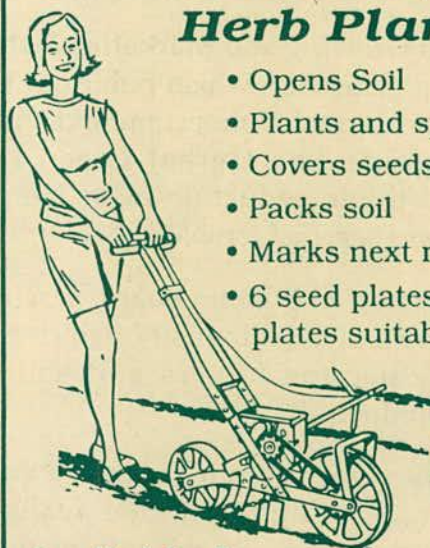
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The US Herb Growing and Marketing Network sets up on the Internet

The Herb Growing and Marketing Network, a US herb organisation which publishes the bimonthly *The Herbal Connection* and the herb resource guide *The Herbal Green Pages*, announced the introduction of its computer bulletin board service HerbNet.

It's a commercial bulletin board, serving the national herb and floral industry, which aims to bring together the buyers and sellers of botanical products.

Members can list their crops by variety, description, price and projected availability. Buying members may use this information and locate products in a fraction of the time that current methods require. They may also enter product requests that can be responded to by supplier members.

In addition, HerbNet has commercial advertising sections grouped by products and/or service category, a calendar of events, and a text based botanical encyclopedia is planned. A complete messaging service is also available.

There's free tech support and to get people interested, free access is being offered for members through the rest of 1995. It's a way to test the product, get the bugs out and get everyone hooked. After 1/1/96 the price will be US\$10 per month for unlimited usage.

For more info contact: The Herbal Connection, P O Box 245, Silver Spring, PA 17575, USA. Ph. 717-393-3295.

The Herb Growing and Marketing Network is a resource service that provides information on specific herbal questions to its members, as well as publishing a bimonthly trade journal *The Herbal Connection*, and the annual *Herbal Green Pages*.



NASAA & BFA 1995 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Howard and I were invited by the two bodies to attend the conference, and the dinner afterwards.

It was good to meet up again with the various NASAA and BFA directors and we believe that we have now laid the foundation for a good working relationship. In the coming year we will be looking at uniting the organic standards, and at perhaps marketing our produce and products under one logo, which will have room for the name of the certifying body.

This is all good news, especially as a lady from Hassell and Associates, they of the organic survey earlier in the year, gave some of the results of this effort. One of the marketing restraints, it was indicated, is that the public is confused by the different labels. One organic logo, which can be pushed by all the organisations, will be much more identifiable for our customers.

While we're on the matter of the survey: all together 14,000 forms were sent out, of which only 460 were returned. I must say that you, OHGA members, have certainly risen to the occasion. We mailed out 150 forms and received back over 80 in the end. More than 50%. Well done, and thanks. Hopefully we'll get the end results in soon, now that the report has been compiled, and I can give them to you properly.

Congratulations to Arthur Dakin, who was re-elected as Chairman of the BFA, and to Jan Denham, the new President of NASAA. With Rod May, the previous president, as the new Secretary, NASAA is in good hands and we at OHGA will have no problems working with them.

Michael Burlace, the Organic Farming Officer with NSW Agriculture, gave a us an excellent pep talk after dinner. He urged the organisations to forget about their differences and to work together for the good of the Australian Organic Industry, as this is the only way in which we can go forward and take our rightful place in the international organic movement. It's a shame that Michael is going to leave us, albeit for only two years. We'll miss him during that time.

- Elle

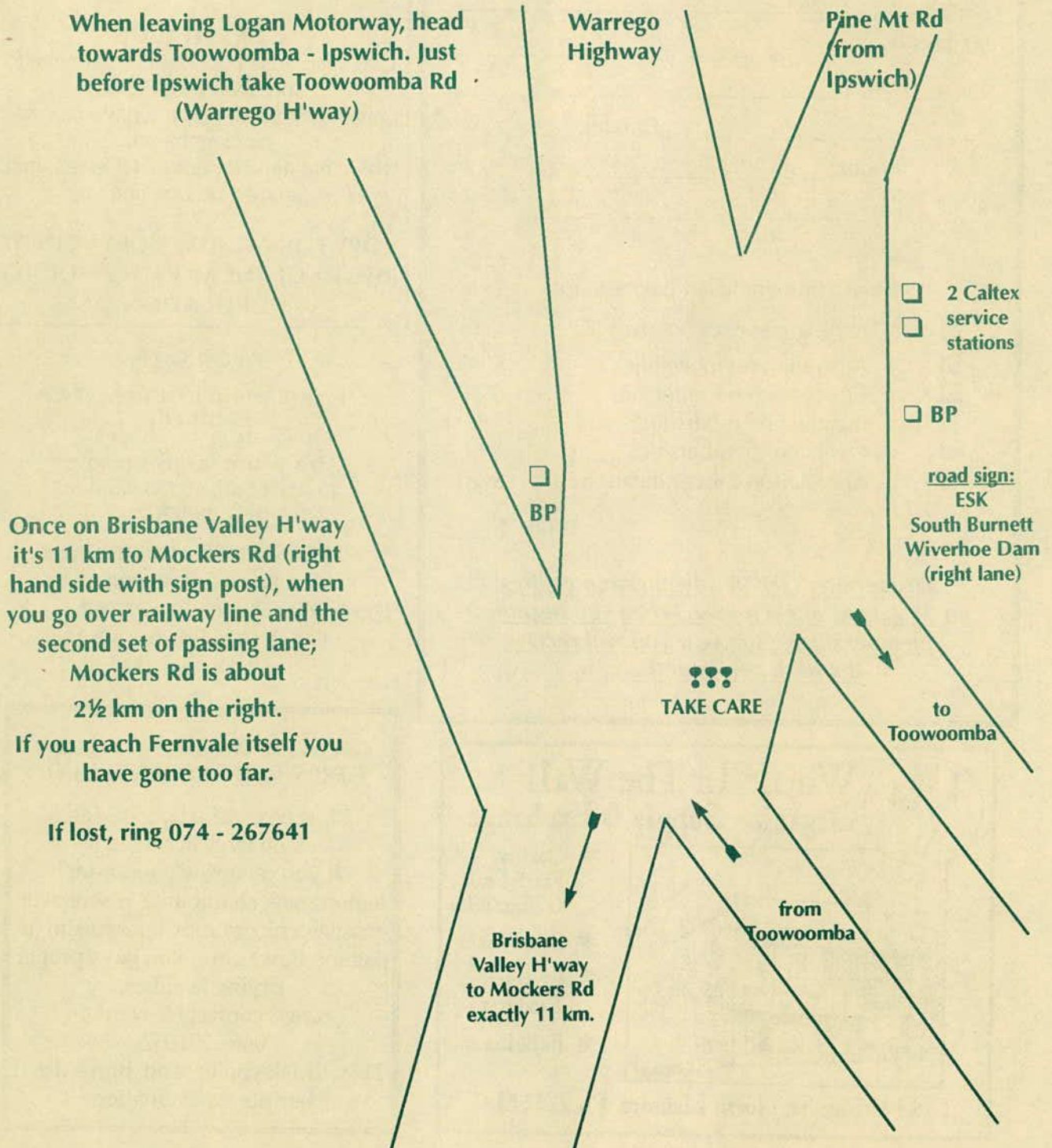


NEXT MEETING / FIELD DAY

Sunday December 3, 1995, from 11.00 am.
at the farm of Ted Forbes, Mockers Rd, Fernvale

Most, if not all, committee members will be there. This is your chance to
get to know them and ask all your questions.

Hope to see you there!



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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Joining fee (<i>once only payable</i>) | \$ 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Australian membership | \$ 40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Concession membership | \$ 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Business membership | \$ 50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Overseas membership | \$ 65 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Application for certification | \$ 10 |

total \$ _____

Please note: OHGA membership expires on 31 August of each year. When you become a member during the year you will receive the back copies of the year.

HERB GROWER ADVERTISING RATES

from January 1995

Full Page	½ Page	¼ Page
<i>casual</i>		
\$75	\$55	\$35
<i>regular (3 or more consecutive issues)</i>		
\$60	\$45	\$25

Backpage:

Casual B/W	\$100	Colour	n/a
Regular B/W	\$80	Colour	\$175

CLASSIFIEDS

Classified ads of up to 4 lines are free to members of OHGA.

Others pay \$2.50 per line payable when placing the ad.

(There are a maximum of 40 letters, incl. spaces, on one line.)

COPY FOR ALL ADS MUST BE IN AT THE 1st OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.

FOR SALE:

Organic worm castings, OHGA certified.

1 kg - \$3, 5 kg - \$12.

Also worm farms for sale.

Contact Barbara Downes on
075 - 909762.

**ORGANIC NON-HYBRID SEEDS,
all culinaries, some medicinals.**

Phone or fax Elle on 066 - 291057, or send

SAE to: HFA, P O Box 6099,
South Lismore 2480.



Whole In The Wall
Organic - Supply & Exchange



43 Bridge St, North Lismore. Ph 212 661.

- * Quality Fresh Fruit & Vegetables
- * Dried Lines
- * Demeter Products
- * Bulk Lines

GROWERS WANTED TO GROW HERBS for the KOALA TEA CO.

Must be certified organic and on large acreage.

If you can grow good mint, lemongrass, chamomile, rosehips or rosellas, chicory root, lemonbalm or passion flower, and you have proper drying facilities, please contact Howard on
066 - 291057.

He will ask you to send him a dried sample for evaluation.



Ginkgo Forte 2000

Formulated to replicate the effective dose used in published clinical research.

Benefits of Ginkgo

Clinical research into the therapeutic use of Ginkgo extracts has resulted in two key areas of application:

- As an aid to the maintenance of peripheral circulation. Reduced blood flow to the periphery results in reduced oxygen and nutrient supply to the extremities.
- As a powerful antioxidant and free radical scavenger. Free radicals may be generated by essentially normal metabolism, exposure to cigarette smoke, alcohol intake, certain preservatives in food, by ozone, chlorine, rancid foods and excess dietary fats.



Guaranteed Potency

Made from a standardised extract, each tablet of Blackmores Ginkgo Forte 2000 has a guaranteed potency of 10.1mg of ginkgo flavone glycosides, the active ingredients of Ginkgo.



 **BLACKMORES**
DEDICATED TO THE BODY
HEART & SOUL

Proudly Australian

herb & flower

RAINBOW REMEDIES

from SPECTRUM HERBAL PRODUCTS P/L

Manufactured for the local community since 1984
Sold Australia-wide — Now available in Mainland China

Australia's original Herbal and Flower Medicines treating 28 common health problems by feeding the body the concentrated nutrition required to relieve the symptoms of disease while assisting to balance the associated mental and emotional states.

The Formulas are listed below:—

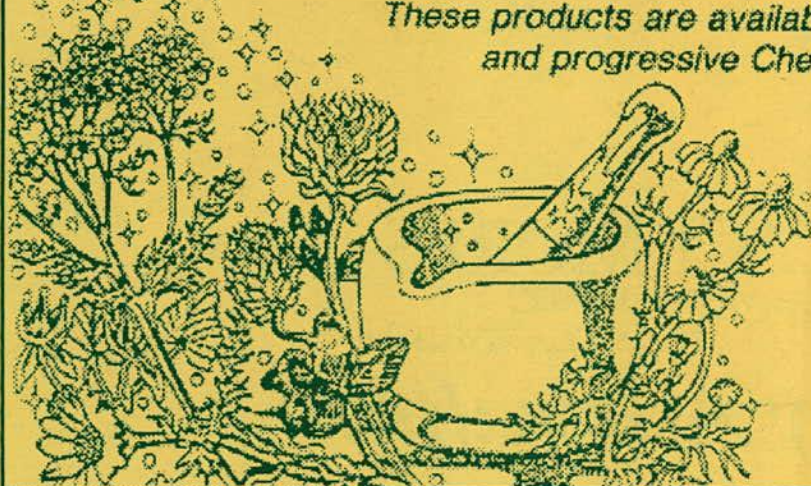
ALLERGY PRONE REMEDY
ANTIBILIOUS MIXTURE
B MINUS SINUS FORMULA
BABY SOOTHING SYRUP
BETTER BREATH MOUTHWASH
BLOOD TONIC
BODY CLEANSE
GINGKO B-CLEAR
COLD AND FLU REMEDY
DIARRHOEA RELIEF REMEDY
DIGESTIVE TONIC
EARDROPS
EYES-BRIGHT REMEDY
GENERAL TONIC

ECHINACEA BODYSHIELD
CYSTITIS SYMPTOM RELIEF
ARTHRITIS PAIN RELIEF
MONTHLY PMT MIXTURE
NASAL DROPS
NERVE EASE FORMULA
NO COUGHIN' FORMULA
PAIN RELIEF REMEDY
PREGNANCY TONIC
RESTFUL SLEEP REMEDY
S.O.S. REMEDY
THROAT GARGLE
TOBACCO CLEANSE
WORMING MIXTURE



**We also Manufacture and Distribute
TAO AROMASSAGE OILS and SPECTRUM FRAGRANT OILS**

*These products are available from your Health Food Shop
and progressive Chemists or **buy direct** from*



THE RAINBOW CENTRE

McLennan Lane, Lismore, 2480
(opposite Lismore Workers Club)

Phone (066) 21 5121

Fax (066) 22 2698

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS