



Matching food-growers with
land-owners in Scarborough

Newsletter

Summer 2011

Welcome to the summer issue of **Growing Opportunities newsletter** - a Scarborough-based land-sharing and food-growing project based at Castle Community Office, 9 Market Vaults, St Helen's Square, Scarborough YO11 1EU - a project drop-in is held every Monday, 10am - 1pm.

What to grow after mid-summer?

The longest day has now been and gone... But don't worry, there are still lots of things that you can sow and grow. Here are a few suggestions for later crops...

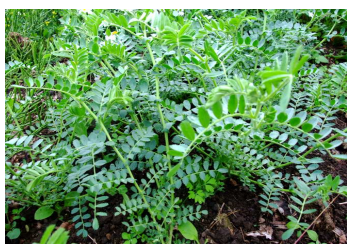
Until the end of July... beetroot and carrots can be sown directly into the ground. You could also try growing main crop peas into July (it is recommended to plant by the end of June but I have sown these later and got a reasonable crop).

Until the end of August... radish, kale, turnip, salads, oriental leaves (including pak choi, Chinese cabbage, oriental spinach, chop suey greens), delicious raw in salads or cooked in stir-fries. Late cropping seed potatoes (Christmas potatoes) are available from some seed merchants from August and can be planted straight in the ground without chitting. If you have access to a glasshouse or coldframe, these can be planted under cover for extra protection in the event of early onset winter like last year.



Late summer into winter... spinach until early autumn and winter salad onions from August.

It is best to avoid sowing seeds in very hot weather as this can inhibit germination. Try sowing in the evening, make sure the soil is very moist and the water seed bed regularly.



Experimenting is fun!

This year I am growing chickpeas. I have often wondered what they look like and planted 10 in a tray - they all germinated and look very pretty with little white flowers. They have put on a spurt of growth after all the rain so perhaps they are used to a moist climate? Hopefully I will get enough for at least one stew...

Gardening workshops

GO members can benefit from the expertise of professional gardener Kevin Riley. With over 20 years' experience, Kev has a wealth of knowledge on growing all things - fruit, flowers and vegetables. Details of potential topics (of which there are many) and the first workshop date are supplied separately. Workshops will also provide an opportunity to meet socially and exchange spare plants and seeds. We are grateful to Elders Street for providing an indoor classroom for evening workshops - a real bonus if the weather is cool or wet! Please get in touch if you have any topics that you would like to learn about and confirm your attendance.

Anne's inspirational vegetable garden tours

We are also delighted to be able to offer opportunities to absorb some of Anne Artley's gardening wisdom. Anne has been an organic grower for many years and also has a passion for flowers and creating stunning nectar-rich borders. She is happy to give guided tours of her lovely allotment at Sandybed. She is there most mornings so if you would like to visit please get in touch on 07224 311750 so that arrangements can be made.



David's first food-growing year

Under the Growing Opportunities scheme, I took over a small, well-dug over garden in March this year. I am growing a selection of early and maincrop potatoes, onions, shallots, garlic, raspberries and strawberries. I also have access to 2 apple trees!

My arrangement with the landowners is that I can use the garden until November. I don't plan to plant any more vegetables, as, since taking on the garden I've been given an allotment. This opportunity (my first) of growing food has given me an invaluable experience and a great deal of confidence to take forward to my new allotment.

I obtained permission from the landowners to install a water butt. Though, given the garden's very close proximity to my house, its small size and the English summer weather, this hasn't been necessary. A daily early morning walk with a watering can has sufficed.

As a consequence of growing fruit I've begun to explore preserving - jam-making, freezing and dehydrating. My children often come to the garden and have enjoyed and learned along with me.

I've been working on the garden with my physiotherapist at least once a week. The experience has significantly helped me to improve my health after a recent Stroke.

Please get in touch with your stories and experiences ... we would love to hear from you!
Contact Christine on: (Mobile) 07724 311750; Email: info@growingopportunities.org.uk

Making compost - a brief guide

Compost making is a great way to return as much fertility to the soil as possible. Pretty much anything taken out the ground can be put back in. However, roots from brassicas (such as cabbages, broccoli and cauliflower) should be burnt as these can carry club root virus.



Even pernicious weeds such as docks, dandelions and couch grass can be composted but are best left for over a year and covered with black plastic to increase heat. The bigger a heap, the hotter it is so using pallets is a good way to achieve this (if space allows). After spreading compost made from weeds, leave for a couple of weeks before planting and hoe in any weed seedlings. To get the best compost, mix plant material with shredded paper or cardboard. Avoid using packaging with shiny coatings as plastic film may need to be removed - a very time-consuming job!

Nettles and comfrey are good to add as they are high in nitrogen and will accelerate the breakdown process. Autumn leaves also make fantastic compost - have you ever noticed the lovely rich loamy soil in woodlands? Again, it is good to add paper as a source of carbon and also grass cuttings or other leafy material to increase nutrient levels.

Get in touch if you would like to know more about composting and this will be included in forthcoming workshops. If you would like to take composting further, why not get involved with the Yorkshire Rotters? Visit <http://www.letstalklessrubbish.com/> for more details.

Growing Opportunities stats

At the end of June, 20 land-offers were registered, of which 12 have been matched with food-growers and 4 more soon to be matched. Some unmatched gardens are out of town and others need groundwork to get them in a suitable condition for cultivation. The project strives to make the most suitable matches possible - the more people that are involved, the easier this becomes! Individual growers, groups and businesses are involved - demonstrating the broad appeal of food-growing. I hope you have had a positive experience and are able to help spread the word...

Growing Opportunities is managed by Castle Community Network (CCN), registered charity no. 1135168.
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