



OPEN PRODUCE AND FLOWER SHOW

GRANDSTAND COMMUNITY CENTRE
MAIN HALL

Saturday September 18th 2021

Coffee Morning 9am to 1pm

ADMISSION - FREE

Admission to the Main Hall for refreshments will commence at
9am

Exhibits to be staged on the day of the show between
7.30am and 9am.

SHOW HALL WILL BE OPEN AT 12PM
Presentation of Prizes at 1.30pm

Completed entry forms to the Society Store by 11.30am Saturday
11th September or to one of the following address by 8pm
Wednesday 15th September
Mal Reynolds Ryland Cottage 51 Eastfield Lane Welton LN2 3ND
Martin Thorpe 13 Occupation Rd Lincoln LN1 3LD
Kay Lamb 16 Windmill View Mill Rd Lincoln LN1 3JW

The AGM was finally able to go ahead for which the Chair and committee are to be thanked and congratulated. All went smoothly, the committee was returned with Mal Reynolds being re-elected to the chair.

Members with email should have received a draft of the minutes – which will be confirmed (or otherwise!) at next year's AGM.

The garden around and to the rear of the store has been lovingly maintained throughout the year and the pandemic – but no major work is planned for it in the near future.

The store has discontinued Durston's composts and will be selling 'Gro-Well' for the foreseeable future – including a peat-free version.

RETURN OF THE SHOW...

The show is as good as its members' support Go on, do your bit, you know it makes sense!

Entry forms available in our 2nd attachment.

PLANNING AHEAD:

 **Autumn planting garlic and onion sets, broad beans and peas** are now available at the Store.


Garlic is very reliable when planted between the first week in October and mid-November – it needs about a month of night-time temperatures below 10° to assure the bulb splits into cloves.

It's normal for some of the onions to bolt in the spring, and the over-winter weather can be detrimental to beans and peas– but it's a rare year when the joy of early and tasty crops doesn't justify the risk / effort.

Some protection against the worst of winter's ravages should be helpful – and early broad beans don't suffer from black fly.

So – if you've never tried it, have a go

Meanwhile,

 Keep an eye out for the Society's **'Seed and Potato' order paperwork** – and spend some time poring over the new season's catalogue(s): this should help you make the best choices you can.

 Make sure you get your orders back to the society in good time.

Tips:

Exercise some self-restraint with the catalogue(s) or, like the editor, you'll end up with more seeds than you know what to do with!

Varieties awarded the **RHS 'Award of Garden Merit' (AGM)** will be among the most reliable and least problematic varieties to grow.

LEAF MOULD AND COMPOST - GARDENING THAT DOESN'T COST THE EARTH!

Leaves will be coming off the trees soon – and leaf mould is a wonderful, free, valuable resource, simultaneously saving fallen leaves from the incinerator and the ensuing release of climate changing CO₂.

If you're lucky enough to be able to acquire good quantities of leaves it will be worth your while to create a simple, out-of-the-way chicken-wire container to house leaves while they rot down – or just stuff them in plastic bags, puncture the bottom of the bags, pour in a can of water and stack the bags out of the way.

They'll need leaving for a year or two, but once you've been up and running for a while you'll have fresh leaf mould every year.

Compost: autumn clearing provides lots of material for the compost bins and good garden compost is garden gold. Like fine wine and good cheese, it needs plenty of time to mature ...

Add plenty of shredded paper, card or small woody material to your softer materials or you'll risk a poor result. Grass cuttings need to be well mixed in. Mix and/or turn the heap / bin contents occasionally and you'll have a quicker and better result.

Generally we home gardeners add material bit by bit so a proper 'binful' takes a while to achieve, at which point you will need to start a second heap of fresh material and the finished heap will need to be left to mature – again mixing / turning from time to time will accelerate the process.

Tip:

Potato and tomato blight can only survive on living material – it is therefore perfectly safe to compost their foliage.

Blighted potatoes and tomatoes themselves are still viable, so dispose of them elsewhere – municipal waste processes reach a high enough temperature to kill the blight spores.

A Gardener's Thoughts

<p>A nature-rich garden is what we all need With oodles of flowers, and veg and an occasional weed, Welcoming wildlife from far and wide, With somewhere to forage, somewhere to hide. A place where ladybirds can spend the day, Controlling the greenfly in their own little way, While the thrush keeps an eye on a snail or two, Bees can be heard as they work their way through.</p> <p>The flowers in the border, the plants grown in pots, Helenium, Echinacea and Forget-me-nots, Peles and Petunias make a colourful sight, Attracting the wildlife by day and by night.</p>	<p>And the rockery, a place where the bugs can roam, A crack in a stone that they can call home, To raise a new family, to teach them with pride How to find food, or when they should hide.</p> <p>So let's all do our bit to show that we care, Grow a few plants that we're happy to share, In the nature-rich garden that we know we all need, With oodles of flowers, And veg, And the occasional weed.</p>
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TO KILL OR NOT TO KILL?

With thanks to Geoff Jones for this thoughtful contribution to our newsletter

As allotmenters our greatest challenge, apart from the weather, over which we have no control, is the flora and fauna which constantly threaten our crops. Whatever we plant, we can be sure there will be something out there threatening to eat it, weaken it or out-compete it.

So, what can we do about these ubiquitous pests? We can:

- choose to live with them, and accept that we share our produce with all the lifeforms;
- zap them with poisons – herbicides and pesticides, or
- we can work with nature and do our best to nurture our plants and the soil they grow in, without turning our plots into killing fields.

I favour the last option.

There are so many ways to grow healthy, abundant crops without killing everything that gets in our way, even if we prefer not to go fully organic.

You can, for instance:

- hoe and hand weed, rather than using glyphosate – which, despite what the adverts tell you, does accumulate in soil and the groundwater, (and therefore you);
- grow companion plants to provide protection from pests, e.g. tagetes with tomatoes;
- pick the soft tops off broad beans to prevent a blackfly attack (and cook 'em – they're good!);
- be tidy enough to minimise homes for snails, slugs and woodlice near vulnerable crops;
- grow nasturtiums as a decoy to tempt cabbage white butterflies away from your brassicas, or
- for full protection, cover them, (and carrots) with fleece or Enviromesh.

What's wrong with using — cides on our crops?

The obvious answer is that some of the poison will inevitably linger as a residue in or on what you were taking home to eat. Many commercially grown crops, such as potatoes, are sprayed upwards of eight times before they are harvested.

Even more importantly, every time we spread poison we are killing creatures that are part of the food chain. Soil micro-organisms are at the bottom of the chain; they are eaten by the insects, then come the birds, frogs and hedgehogs, and then the top predators, which of course includes us.

The recent UN report on biodiversity and ecosystems highlighted the critical loss of insects globally, due to the loss of habitat and modern agricultural practices. Every time we use poisons on our plots, we make ourselves part of the problem.

So next time you find that weed, slug, caterpillar, aphid, neighbour threatening your prize produce, please don't reach for the spray – think of a more eco-friendly solution.

Happy Growing.

IN THE SEASONAL KITCHEN

SQUASH STUFFED WITH LEEKS

Small gem or acorn squash are ideal for this recipe; you could even use a squat butternut. Those around 400g will serve one; larger squash can be shared.

Serves 4

35g butter

2 large leeks, trimmed and thinly sliced

1 teaspoon English mustard

4 tablespoons crème fraîche

125g Gruyère or other well-flavoured hard cheese, finely grated

2–4 smallish squash (400–800g each)

A handful of thyme sprigs

Sea salt and freshly ground

Black pepper

Preheat the oven to 190C / gas mark 5. Heat the butter in a saucepan over a medium heat and add the leeks. As soon as they begin to sizzle, turn the heat right down and cover the pan. Sweat the leeks gently for about 10 minutes, until very soft. Remove from the heat and stir in the mustard, crème fraîche and cheese. Season the mixture well with salt and pepper, as it will be surrounded by a good amount of squash.

Cut a small slice off the base of each squash so it will stand up on a baking tray without wobbling. Carefully slice a "lid" off the top of each one too and set aside. Now, with a small, sharp knife, cut into the centre of each squash, then use a (tea)spoon to scoop out all the seeds and fibres.

Fill the squash cavities with the leek mixture – they should be about two-thirds full. Tuck a few thyme sprigs into the centre of each. Put the "lids" back on top and stand the squash on a large baking tray – there should be plenty of room for hot air to circulate around them.

Bake for 50–60 minutes – possibly longer if the squash are large – until the flesh feels very tender inside. Serve straight away.

Potato and Leek Boulangere (serves 4-6)

Immensely satisfying, terrifically tasty (well cream and cheese, what more's to be said?), quick to prepare and it all goes in the oven. Needs just a light salad to make a meal – unless you fancy a sausage or two with it

Ingredients

25g (1oz) butter
500g (1lb) leeks, sliced
2 garlic cloves, chopped
875g (1 3/4 lb) potatoes, scrubbed and thinly sliced
4 tomatoes, sliced
300ml (1/2) pint double cream
300ml (1/2) pint milk
125g (4oz) smoked cheese, grated (or a good cooking cheese of your choice ...)
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Use the butter to grease a large, deep 30 x 30cm (12" x 12") ovenproof dish. Put in half of the chopped leeks and garlic, cover with half of the slices of potato and season well.
2. Cover with a layer of the remaining leeks and garlic, then the remaining potato slices and season well again.
3. Cover with the slices of tomato.
4. Mix the cream with the milk and pour over the top.
5. Cover with grated cheese and bake in a preheated oven, 180c, 160° fan, Gas Mark 4, for 1 hour or until the potatoes are cooked and the cheese well browned.

Suitable for freezing

PICKLED SHALLOTS OR ONIONS

Ingredients

500g shallots / onions

25g table salt

450ml (Sarsons) Pickling vinegar

100g granulated sugar

5 dried chillies (or to taste)

5 bay leaves ((or to taste)

Method the hot water trick really does make peeling the shallots much, much easier ...)

Put the shallots/onions in a large bowl and tip over a kettle of boiling water. Leave for 20 seconds or so and then tip into a colander, return to the bowl and pour over lots of very cold water. The skins should now peel off very easily.

Once peeled, layer in a bowl and sprinkle each layer with salt. Cover and leave overnight or up to 24hrs.

Meanwhile pour the vinegar, sugar, chillies and bay leaves into a saucepan, bring to the boil then remove from the heat and set aside to allow the spices to infuse.

The following day rinse the shallots well and pat dry. Pack them into sterilised Kilner or other jars and use a jug to pour over the vinegar, including the chillies and bay. If using an ordinary jar, use a plastic lid.

Seal and allow to mature for 4-6 weeks.

NOTE: Pickled shallots or onions will soften eventually – but if you have enough, keep some back and pickle them later in the year.