

# PERMANEWS



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**This newsletter is  
emailed to members  
free or can be  
purchased at the  
meeting for**

**₡2**

## President's Message

**IF ONLY I KNEW THEN WHAT I KNOW NOW!**

As you get on in life, it's amazing the amount of knowledge you can gain over the years. Just recently I have really gained more of the wisdom of traditional processing of food and this includes soaking and the fermentation of grains and legumes before eating them. There is a real issue with phytates and enzyme inhibitors that actually become nutrition robbers and interfere with the absorption of our nutrients. Now I find that after raising pigs and eating the meat for the past twenty years has had a detrimental effect on blood cell aggregation. I didn't realise the meat had to be marinated in an acidic medium such as vinegar with the mother included. Live blood analyses has shown the difference between the two methods. Beef and lamb meat is not a problem, only with pork.

You almost need to be a rocket scientist to stay in good health! But that is because we are re- inventing the wheel. This wisdom has been with us for many generations but it has all been cast aside when the industrial revolution changed the way our food was prepared.

I have also noted that as you get to reach the fifties, a women's skin condition can tell a lot about a person's digestive powers. Sallow wrinkly skin lacks good fats and oils as well as a full spectrum of minerals and this is often due to vegetarianism. I know I might be stirring up a hornets nest here and no one will always agree with everything, but I have been reading a lot of the Weston A Price Wise Traditions magazines and they also state that vegetarians are lacking complete proteins in the right proportions with detrimental effects on their long term health. Much against mainstream thinking, butter and animal fats are excellent fats for our good health as adequate protein intake 'carries' fat throughout the body. These kinds of fats keep the skin smooth and supple right into old age as well as keep you going like a well oiled machine.

Now this is where the garden comes into it. I've always been a great believer in creating fertile soil with animal manure. Being self sufficient I have it lying right next to the garden ready to use for my soil fertility. It all makes so much sense to me to have fresh veggies and livestock to support the whole system. Bon appetite!

Please join me on my Facebook page if you want to discuss this further.

President, Elisabeth Fekonia

# **FEBRUARY MEETING**

## **IS ON THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2014**

### **PERMACULTURE NOOSA**

**PRESENTS:**

#### **YOU ARE THE KEY ! with Gary Hands**

Gary from Kookaburra Organics has been an organic farmer in the region for over twelve years. He understands the climate in south east Queensland and he regularly shares his knowledge at workshop events. Gary is a regular presenter at the Qld Garden Expo. Kookaburra Organics is a certified organic market garden with an online home delivery service servicing Brisbane CBD and suburbs, and the Sunshine coast every week.

Authentic and Clean – this is how real food should taste! Every family deserves food grown with integrity and with appropriate labelling certification to support its origin. We need to have confidence in the food chain from farmer to plate.

#### **GROWING YOUR OWN MULCH with Kerry Nagle**

Over the last 12 years Kerry has spent hundreds of dollars on buying and transporting bales of mulch hay for the garden, only to have it disappear into the soil over the course of a season. Spurred on by two other talks at PN meetings, ie one by Elisabeth Fekonia and another by Frances Michaels, Kerry decided to aim to produce all the mulch for her gardens on site. When a bale of hay sat in the carport for over six months, she realised she was there. Kerry will tell you what she grows and how she uses it to mulch and feed her gardens.

#### **RUSSIAN / ELEPHANT GARLIC with Mel Hobbins**

Mel Hobbins came to Australia in late 2004, from the UK, and has been on their 30 acre Traveston property for 9 years. Quite a change from the small house blocks he had in the UK, although Mel had several Allotment Gardens, most without a water supply. Although primarily a horse property he has made an impact on the landscape with an extensive Orchard, traditional raised veggie beds, a 900 tree hardwood plantation, rain forest and revegetation plantings and since 2010 has been experimenting with and expanding plantings of Tropical Veggies and support species.

**Permaculture Noosa meetings are FREE and open to the public. Beginning at 7pm with a Marketplace (where members sell their produce or homemade products), the guest speakers start at 7.30pm. Supper (gold coin donation) is served at 9pm.**

For further information email [info@permaculturenoosa.com.au](mailto:info@permaculturenoosa.com.au)

## C O U R S E S

As a Permaculture Noosa member you are entitled to have your courses (or a link to your website) in the PermaNews. Space is limited, however.

### PERMACULTURE RESEARCH INSTITUTE – SUNSHINE COAST with Tom Kendall

**WATER MANAGEMENT**  
3 – 7 March 2014

**SUSTAINABLE BUILDING**  
10 – 14 March 2014

**3 WEEK RURAL FOCUS INTERNSHIP**  
16 March – 4 April 2014

**PERMACULTURE DESIGN CERTIFICATE**  
27 April – 9 May 2014

To book, please email  
[info@permaculturesunshinecoast.org](mailto:info@permaculturesunshinecoast.org), or visit  
[www.permaculturesunshinecoast.org](http://www.permaculturesunshinecoast.org) for more  
information.



### ELISABETH FEKONIA WORKSHOPS

Learn how to make your own cheddar cheese, brie and quark as well as other fermented, raw, dairy products with award winning, accredited permaculture teacher. Yoghurt and kefir cultures are available for \$2 each and will be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February.

Learn how to make easy sourdough bread and sourdough pikelets and also including making sauerkraut, kimchi, lactic ferment of nuts, seeds and fruit and a batch of fruit wine. This very hands on workshop will be fun and easy to learn with plenty of taste testing on the day and will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. Workshops include morning tea, lunch, a manual and cost is \$95 each and will be held at 1 Miva St, Cooroy.  
Both are full day workshops from 9.30- 4pm.

For a course overview and enrolment forms, contact Elisabeth Fekonia on 0432 180523 or email [info@permacultureproduce.com.au](mailto:info@permacultureproduce.com.au)  
[www.permacultureproduce.com.au](http://www.permacultureproduce.com.au)



### CRYSTAL WATERS - PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE

**Permaculture Design Certificate PLUS** course at Crystal Waters from 20th April – 2nd May 2014. (This is a full PD certificate course, where successful graduates become qualified to work as Permaculture Designers around the world).

This programme will be led by Max O Lindegger, who has been teaching and consulting in Ecovillage design, ecology and permaculture for over 35 years. Max will be supported by guest teachers, Robin Clayfield and Morag Gamble: both highly respected and experienced consultants, designers and teachers in permaculture and ecological development in their own right, and a pool of talented local guest practitioners,

REGISTRATIONS ARE NOW OPEN:  
The full PDC course fee is \$2,100 or \$ 1,800 EARLY BIRD special, if booked and paid for in full by 31st January 2014.

Course fees include:

- Camping at the Crystal Waters Eco Caravan Park. Other accommodation options are also available on request at your own cost.
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner, morning & afternoon teas.
- 72 hours teaching time
- Extensive course notes
- PDC certificate
- Social & sightseeing events
- Crystal Waters Monthly Market
- Permaculture Design Certification as approved by Bill Mollison
- Eco Village living experience in the award winning Crystal Waters Permaculture Village
- Visits to eco homes and gardens to experience, learn & share Permaculture practices with community members.

For full details, please visit the website at <http://crystalwaters.org.au/permaculture-design-course-april-2014/>

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## Seed Savers Group - March Meeting

**DAY:** Thursday, 13th March 2014 (second Thursday of every month)  
**TIME:** 9.30 am to 11.30 am  
**PLACE:** 'A Touch of the Past' Coffee Shop, 18 Reserve St, Pomona.  
**TOPIC:** Recycling Milk Containers and other items for the Garden

Permaculture Noosa's seed savers group meets on the second Thursday of every month at 'A Touch of the Past' coffee shop in Pomona. We process and package seeds that have been saved by local gardeners. While we work we talk about various topics of relevance to gardening and growing vegetables on the Sunshine Coast.

This month John Mole has offered to give a talk on using recycled milk containers in the garden. As John is a local gardener of considerable experience, it is well worth coming to hear him speak. You may have some recycling tips of your own to add to the discussion, so come and join us for a cuppa, and maybe also a tasty morsel from the coffee shop.

The processing and packaging tasks we undertake, while we chat and exchange information, are very simple and require no experience. If you have never saved your own seed before, our meetings are an opportunity to learn how. As the seeds we process are distributed to gardeners throughout this region, it is also an opportunity to contribute to the preservation of crops that have proved viable for the Sunshine Coast, through the circulation of good seed stock harvest after harvest.



### CHICKEN LITTER

A friend of a member gets a LOT of chicken litter from commercial chook farms so it is a mixture of chook poo and sawdust. There are 3 big piles at different stages of decomposition and anyone can come and get from whichever pile they like. \$25 a ute or trailer load (loaded), or \$15 if you shovel it yourself. More information from Cecil and Heather Davison 5446 7499 - located at North Arm.

# NEEDED ..... not just wanted !

The Permanews has been prepared, printed and sent out every month for many, many years. However, unless I can get someone to help me, we will have several months where the Permanews doesn't appear.

I am having a holiday (travelling to Alice Springs) for a few months and will not be able to prepare the articles for the May and June Permanews.

If anyone can help, please contact me as soon as possible ([judith.anderson1@bigpond.com](mailto:judith.anderson1@bigpond.com) ). Although we leave in April, it would be good if my replacement could start being involved in some way in March, so they know what's what when May comes around.

Once collected, the articles are then sent to Ulrike, who formats them into the wonderfully presentable email version we all receive.

Ulrike has many commitments and is also looking for a support person to help produce the Permanews for those months when she is not available. If you are somewhat knowledgeable about computers and formatting, please contact Ulrike ([ulrike@duck-books.com](mailto:ulrike@duck-books.com)) for further information about this role.

The newsletter is much easier for us to produce by splitting the two roles, but it does mean two different support volunteers are needed to keep the wheels turning.

Permaculture Noosa only runs because of those who volunteer. Please become involved and help keep it running.

Thanks and regards,

Judith

## PERMACULTURE NOOSA SUNSHINE COAST PLANTING GUIDE FOR FEBRUARY

Beetroot*	Cape Gooseberry	Chives	Climbing beans
Dwarf Beans	Eggplant	Leeks	Malu Khia
Maize	Marigold	Marjoram*	Nasturtium
Sunflower	Sweet Basil	Sweet Corn	Tomato*

**Notes:**

1. Plants may be potted up to 4 weeks prior if kept in a shade house
2. # indicates plants are frost sensitive
3. \* indicates plants will respond better in the shade
4. Seasonal variations may occur between coastal and hinterland areas.

**Your feedback would be welcome.**

# THE BENEFITS OF WORM CASTINGS

PART 4

*The final instalment of our story of Worm Castings.*

## WORM CASTINGS TEA: FROM CASTINGS TO TEA

So, "why tea?" one may wonder. With compost and worm products demonstrating such tremendous benefit to soil and plant life, why take the extra steps to generate a liquid from this already understood and easily applied solid material?

Leaf surfaces, like plant roots, harbor a rich microbial population that protects the leaf, and thus the plant, from infection and attack by pathogenic organisms. When the microbial consortium present on the leaf surface is reduced by pesticide use or environmental damage, it exposes leaf surface, opening infection points. We can re-inoculate the leaf with the diverse communities of microbial life found in compost and worm castings by applying a tea made from these materials. If you are building a garden in a location where pesticides have been used, teas can be applied as soil drenches and root washes to reintroduce to the soil microbial communities that may have been damaged by the pesticide. The microbes can then continue to provide protection from pathogens to the plant as well as aiding in breakdown of any pesticide residues in the soil, thereby preventing ground water contamination.

Teas also carry the soluble nutrients and beneficial growth regulators contained in the solid matter used to make the tea. Many of these compounds can be absorbed through the leaf surface, feeding and enriching the plant.

## TEA OR LEACHATE?

The microorganisms present in an aerobic compost or vermi-processing system require significant amounts of moisture in order to break down the organic materials present. They use the water in both their life processes and as avenues for moving through the material. These organisms are swimmers. Thus, when we build a system for the remediation of organic wastes, whether or not worms are involved, we moisten the organic materials to ensure efficient breakdown. As the bacteria and fungi reduce the organic material, the water held within the feedstock is released to the system. As organic materials are broken down by microbial decay, moisture is generated as a by-product of aerobic activity. What this means is that these systems often generate fluids generally referred to as leachates.

Leachate from an actively decomposing pile of organic debris will often carry many of the soluble nutrients that had been present in the solid matter, producing a beneficial growth response when used to water plants. It will also carry small numbers of the micro-organisms present on that solid matter, as well as small bits of undecomposed organic material. This becomes an issue of some concern when materials like manure or post consumer food residuals make up even a portion of the feedstock in the system. There is the possibility that faecal coliforms and other pathogenic organisms can be present in the leachate, potentially contaminating plant and fruit or vegetable surfaces with which it comes into contact.

The bits of undecomposed organic debris in the leachate will continue to be broken down in the liquid where oxygen levels are very low, through the action of anaerobic microorganisms. As they slowly decompose these bits of material anaerobes produce alcohol and phenols toxic to plant roots.

It is not always possible to tell when leachate will produce a beneficial growth response and when it will cause damage. Without a lab test it is not possible to tell when leachate will harbor potentially pathogenic organisms. As such, it is generally recommended that leachate from compost or worm bins not be used on plants, but rather used to moisten the system if it dries out or to moisten new feed stocks before they are included in the system.

Steeping the finished, stable end product of a composting or vermicomposting system in agitated, aerated water, then adding a nutrient mix for microbial growth makes a true tea. The water is agitated to extract as many of the organisms clinging to the solid matter as possible, and the nutrient mix provides those microbes dislodged into the liquid with a food source on which to grow and reproduce.

Aerating the water ensures that it is the aerobic organisms that are supported in the liquid. This blend of food and oxygen in the tea enables the microorganisms to grow to numbers rivalling those found in the solid matter from which the tea is derived. Teas must then be used within a few hours of being generated in order to ensure aerobicity and high microbial populations. Once the oxygen and food are consumed, anaerobic organisms will begin to populate the system, producing alcohols and phenols toxic to plants.

Good tea begins with good, quality compost, worm castings or vermicompost, or a blend of these materials. Provided the solid material is stable and supports sufficient beneficial microbial life, there is nothing in these liquids to cause plant damage.

### HOW TO MAKE YOUR TEA

\*Use 2 handfuls of worm castings in a ten litre watering can and wait 1 week, stir regularly. This liquid mixture can be used as an excellent fertilizer or leaf foliate spray. It also helps to control insects. Many people prefer this method of application.

\*Mix a handful of castings into a ten litre bucket of water. Pour it through a stocking into a watering can. The stocking catches all the fines and other bits and pieces, leaving you with slurry in what looks like a giant teabag. Add the liquid from the slurry to the mix by squeezing out the stocking into the watering can. Apply the liquid to your favourite hungry plants around the base of the plant or sprayed onto their leaves as a foliar fertilizer. Empty the stocking onto your compost pile.

\*Mixing up liquid slurry is also a great way to rejuvenate tired potting mix. This is a richer liquid fertiliser brew. Three or four handfuls of castings into a ten litre bucket of water. Pour it into your pot plant and the fines gradually settle down into the root zone.

\*Fill a bucket 1/5th of the way with worm castings and the rest of the way with water. Add some molasses and kelp/seaweed powder and, stir and aerate by pouring back and forth between two buckets. Do this twice a day for 5 days and let it sit in a warm place. Use the tea for watering your plants or spray on the leaves.

We have known for hundreds of years that earthworms are the best way to improve plant growth and to increase plant yield, such as fruit. Earthworm castings are a wonder product of nature. So if you care about your soil, and your plants, then now is the time to get rid of your purchased, processed fertiliser and use this 100% natural product.

\* \* \*

## The next Community Gardens Gathering in Hobart

### Food 4 Thought

### 6th ACFCGN national community garden gathering

In Hobart from **21 to 23 March 2014**

A national gathering nestled comfortably in Hobart with some of Australia's greatest food garden innovators coming together to teach connect, share, inspire and mobilise. We're all about super productive urban gardens. This is a gathering for your family, for your school, for your community and for your livelihood.

More information at <http://events.communitygarden.org.au/>

## SNAKE BEAN PROJECT

### *Do you have Snake Bean seeds you can donate for this trial?*

Mel Hobbins is undertaking a project into Snake Beans, on behalf of the Seed Saver Group. The object of the project is to trial and identify different varieties and variants of Snake Beans.

My experience of Tropical Vegetables, in Australia, indicates that there are several and in some cases many varieties of each type available, however, there is a distinct lack of actual variety names published or available from seed and plant businesses.

A CSIRO research project I came across into Disease Resistance in Snake Beans, grown in the Darwin area, referred to 74 varieties having been trialled.

Snake Bean (*Vigna unguiculata* var. *sesquipedalis*) seeds, will be described as climbing or bush, an indication of pod length and sometimes seed colour. Imagine that situation with say Tomatoes.

I suspect that many varieties will be in the hands of individuals having been handed down through the generations. If anybody is aware of any likely candidates I would be grateful to receive details.

Ideally I would be seeking a few seeds for trialling together with information as to seed/pod colour, growth habit, pod length, eating qualities and original source of seeds.

For the remainder of this summer the objectives are to identify pod colours/forms and bulk up on seed quantities in preparation for full trials next summer.

Mel Hobbins can be contacted on Tel: 5485 1975 or email: [essomel@skymesh.net.au](mailto:essomel@skymesh.net.au)



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## THANKS FROM CHRISTMAS RAFFLE WINNER

Val Wilson won the Christmas raffle at the Permaculture Noosa Meeting in December last year. Val, who seems to have the energy and creativity of at least 5 of the rest of us, was over the moon to win a Permaculture Design Certificate course with Tom Kendall at Permaculture Research Institute Sunshine Coast.

Val has a lovely, budding suburban-size permaculture property in Cooroy, with vegies, chickens and a randy rooster. She is a member of Permaculture Noosa, being especially involved with PCN Seed Savers Group, and she is also a driving force at the new Cooroy Community Gardens. Val also designed and built "Costa" the scarecrow, shown at last years Nambour Garden Expo.

Regarding the PDC, Val says "There was 11 students in the class and from all over the world they came. France, Spain, Greece, N.Z, 2 from Canada, Majorca, Buderim, Canberra, Japan." Having now completed her PDC she says, "I am still the same me but can see the need to do more with our block and food production. Tom is doing a great job."

Val would also like to give abundant thanks to Permaculture Noosa for providing the PDC as a raffle prize.



*Photo: Val (left) with Tom and Zaia from PRI Sunshine Coast.*

## NOOSA COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Noosa Community Garden is located at Earl St, Tewantin (near Australis Noosa Lakes). Noosa Council donated 1.5h of land, adjoining United Synergies, for the people's community garden.

Initiated by Slow Food Noosa, the Noosa Community Garden is growing very well thanks to the support of many locals who help regularly.

If you would like to become involved in helping the garden grow, or the chance to get your hands into the soil and growing things, please visit on Friday mornings from 8.30am. Bring hat, gloves, secateurs and please wear closed in shoes.

For more information please contact Erika Hackett on 0409 300 007 or email [Hackett.erika@gmail.com](mailto:Hackett.erika@gmail.com) Also please show your support and visit and LIKE the Facebook page for all the latest info <https://www.facebook.com/NoosaCommunityGarden>



**BELLBUNYA**  
**ORGANIC SWAP-MEET CAFE AND HEALING DAY**

**THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2013**  
**Swap – Buy – Sell – Share – Meet - Network**

The Sustainable Kitchen Organic Cafe will be in full swing again on Thursday, 20 February, from 9am to 12:30pm. at Bellbunya Community in Belli Park.

We are providing a free platform where people who are growing organically can support each other by local selling or purchasing, swapping and networking. People are invited to bring any excess produce, home-made preserves or plants for sale - there is no cost for participation. There will be inside space available on tables for displays; bring any signage you need.

Enjoy live acoustic music in the Sustainable Kitchen Cafe, together with a range of delicious organic, vegan and gluten-free cakes, kombucha and chai, and our own Chef Mana's home-made organic sushi. Back-up music in the cafe is provided by plants at Bellbunya, via "the Machine for the Music of the Plants", the first and only of its kind currently in Australia.

At the same time, a healing day will be operating in the hall where people can bring their therapy/healing modality to share, or receive a treatment for \$10.

This is a wonderful chance to receive a healing session, such as Zen Thai Shiatsu Massage and Therapy, Esoteric healing, Acupuncture, readings... the range depends on who comes on the day!

If you are a healer, this can be an opportunity for you to become known and network with other people in the area, and to share your modality. Feel free to bring your business card or flyer.

Our inaugural monthly organic swap-meet cafe and healing day in January was a huge success, with around 40-50 people enjoying the ambiance, great food and the gifts of healing.

The Schedule for the day:

8:30 am	Healers arrive to set up (and grab a cuppa if they choose)
9:00am	Organic Cafe opens with amazing food
	Swap-meeters are invited to set-up food and produce displays, label and price items
	Live Music in the cafe
10:30am	Free Permaculture talk
11:30am	Free Tour of Bellbunya

A relocalisation initiative for a sustaining future....

Contact Kestrel at Bellbunya for more information on 07 54470181 or email [kestrel \(at\) Bellbunya.org.au](mailto:kestrel@bellbunya.org.au)

BELLBUNYA Sustainable community  
114 Browns Rd, Belli Park

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To contribute to **newsletter, send items to [permanews@permaculturenoosa.com.au](mailto:permanews@permaculturenoosa.com.au)**

**LINKS TO SOME INTERESTING WEBSITES:**

- Links to information on Environmental Disasters:

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/jan/23/europe-failed-learn-environmental-lessons>

- 25 Biggest man-made environmental disasters in History

<http://list25.com/25-biggest-man-made-environmental-disasters-in-history/>

- America's 10 worst man-made environmental disasters

<http://www.mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/photos/americas-10-worst-man-made-environmental-disasters>

***If you have any sites or links you'd like to share send them to [permanews@permaculturenoosa.com.au](mailto:permanews@permaculturenoosa.com.au)***

**Entries for the newsletter are welcomed and can be sent by email or post .**

**Deadline for newsletter contributions is 1st day of each month.**

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