



Groundswell update – December 2008

Sam's garden tips

We were lucky enough to have Sam de Gregorio, local veggie gardener with many years of success share some of his experience at the November AGM.

Here's some of what he does to get great results in his backyard patch

-fruit and veggie scraps from the kitchen are **composted** directly into the garden. He digs trenches about 1 ft deep and fills it, then leaves it for a few months to break down.

-'Blue Special' is a **fertiliser** Sam swears by, it is not available in small quantities for home gardeners, but you can get something similar called 'NPK' at nurseries

-his 7,000 lt watertank supplies all he needs for keeping beds watered, but he only **waters** 2-3 times each week in summer to encourage strong plants. He believes that "too much watering makes plants lazy and they don't develop strong roots that seek out the water.

-to control any **insects** he uses a spray of either soapy water (from the washing machine rinse) or boiled rhubarb leaves.

-once he's planted his seedlings, he uses **milk containers** with the bottom cut out, placed around the seedling as protection

-seeds are saved each year from the plants that have produced good crops

-planting by the **moon** (not at night, but according to its cycle) is part of his veggie garden success

-as a general rule with fruit trees, the 1st trees to flower will be the last to ripen their fruit

-**fruit trees** need food when dormant, he feeds his during winter and prunes most of them too, in a free-standing espaliered row.

-for cherry trees, he prunes them in summer, after they've fruited, while the leaves are on, to avoid excessive weeping from the cuts

-he lets each bed lie fallow (nothing planted) for 2 – 3 months in between each crop

-finally, his tip for great **broad beans** : plant them in July or August, the plants may be shorter but will give a better crop!

Thanks Sam for your knowledge and enthusiasm, we look forward to you visiting again and hopefully teaching us more about grafting, espaliering and moon planting!

Garden get-togethers

(in the garden, last Saturday of the month, 9 – 11.30am)

Meet other Groundswellers, talk compost, watering, organic pest control, share produce, perhaps do your month's communal hour.

****Saturday 29 November****

Garden meetings

(in the garden during daylight savings, in the scout hall over winter, 2nd Tuesday of the month, 6pm)

Be part of the plans and decisions about the garden, listen to guest speakers, share produce, catch up

****9 December**** 6pm, bring a plate of food or drink for end of year celebrating

Did you know?

We have a few new members on the garden committee for the 2009 – a warm welcome to Marion Sheppard and Anthony Glenwright. Old favourites Regina, Simon, Pam, Sharon and Kathleen will be continuing. Many thanks to David Gleeson for his energy and work on the committee over the past few years.

All members are welcome to come along to garden meetings and join in the discussions and decisions.

What will our website do for us?

Go see our new website, still at www.groundswell.org.au.

Register and you will be given access to the forums – the first one is general topics including what's on. The next topic will be ideas to improve the website. We will also have training for those of us who want to learn to update the content.

Welcome BBQ for Frankston High School students and teachers

We held a welcome barbeque Tuesday, 2nd of December for students, teachers and Groundswellers to get to know one another. The students spent some time looking around and have come up with some great ideas of what they will work on for their hands-on project in 2009. Ideas included paving, pergola and noticeboard/signage.

Hope your Christmas is safe and happy and for us gardeners in the spirit of christmas, plant 3 rows of peas....
peas of mind, peas of heart, peas of soul

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Questions, Ideas, Contacts? Contact Regina on h: 9783 4416 or Kathleen on w: 9784 1022

