

# HARVEST

## Its getting Chilly!

Well after an amazingly warm and dry Autumn we're finally getting a taste of Winter weather. Its remarkable how many plants tolerate the cold and frost, and keep growing. Brassicas, peas, spinach, leeks and garlic will keep growing through the cold months, and even cope with frost on their leaves and the soil around them.

We're planning lots of activities this winter to keep us all warm and connected. Read on!



## NEW!! FIMBY Network gatherings

Some of our Garden Craft people are finishing their program this month ('sniff sniff'). We can't bear the thought of not seeing them regularly, so as part of the FIMBY network, we're setting up monthly informal gatherings for Network members.

These gathering won't be as structured at a garden tour, more a chance to have a cuppa and a chat, swap info about good poo sources, exchange seedlings or seed or produce, and share stories.

Locations still to be determined – maybe at warm and comfy local cafes, or demonstration gardens. Let us know if you can recommend places, or if you'd like to host a gathering at your place.

The first sessions will be on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June**. You can attend any or all sessions.

Hobart area:	10.00 am
Kingston area:	12.30 pm
Eastern Shore:	3.00 pm

## More media attention

The weekly Tas Country Newspaper recently printed an article about FIMBY, and featured two of our wonderful Garden Craft gardeners: Thomas Oswin and Wendy Austin. Thanks Thomas and Wendy for your generosity and good humour! We hope you enjoy the celebrity!

## fimby fresh news no. 3 May 2010

### Thinking about fruit trees

July and August are a good time for planting many fruit trees in Tassie. At this time of year, the deciduous trees are dormant, and can be purchased and planted as "bare rooted" stock. In other words, they're not growing in a pot, they have been dug from the ground in a nursery, and the roots wrapped for temporary moving before replanting.

If you want to grow fruit in a small area like most suburban backyards, you'll probably have thought about espaliering or training the trees to get the most out of them, and to keep them manageable and net-able. Most fruit trees for urban settings need to be grafted on to dwarfing rootstock, which controls the vigour of the tree. So it pays to be attentive when you're buying trees to both the variety and the rootstock type.

One of the widest selections of grafted fruit trees, especially apples, is available from Woodbridge Fruit Trees. They are a mail order company, but they've agreed with us that if we submit a bulk order for FIMBY people, we can go and pick the trees up in July or August to deliver to our customers, and save the postage cost.

So, have a browse of their online catalogue and let us know what you'd like to order. Be aware that some varieties are already sold out (cherries, quinces, crab apples, lots of cider, and many pears). They also have packs of 10 hazels which include four varieties to ensure good pollination.

Their website is full of useful information and tips – well worth a visit. [www.woodbridgefruittrees.com.au](http://www.woodbridgefruittrees.com.au)





*Our happy Oatlands / Parattah crew after a solid morning's work setting up Jo's wicking beds in old water tanks. We love the country lunches after these jobs!*

## Planting guide for May

Most of the summer crops are finally finished, after an unusually warm Autumn that extended the growing season.

When you're cleaning out the beds, don't forget not to compost old tomato vines, as they can carry disease.

The planting list for May is almost the same as for April.

**Brassicas** can go in as sturdy seedlings. This family includes broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, kohlrabi, kale. Give them plenty of space, they get pretty big!

**Leeks** and **spring onions** can both go in now. We sow these in polystyrene boxes first, then transplant them out when they're big enough to handle.

**Garlic** cloves can still be planted through May and June. If you select the biggest cloves to plant, you'll get bigger heads to harvest. Plant them flat end down, pointy end up.

**Broad beans** and **peas** (snow peas, sugarsnaps, podding peas) can be sown now as a winter growing green manure crop. They'll flower and bear crops in Spring, and enrich the soil in the meantime.

Roots such as **swede**, **turnip** and **radish** should still germinate well, and don't forget the favourite winter green: **English spinach**. Sow seed directly, don't transplant seedlings or they'll bolt.

**Silverbeet** or **rainbow chard** sturdy seedlings planted now will grow slowly through winter, but are hardy to frost.

In warm raised beds in sheltered spots we're also planting lots of Asian greens, eg **Pak Choy**, **Bok Choy**, **Tat Soi**, **Rocket**, **Mizuna**, and **mustards**. We're finding that having well drained, compost enriched raised beds seems to allow us to extend the planting time of many seeds and still get good germination and growth into winter.

## Grafting workshop coming up!

We're delighted to announce that Bob Magnus, Tasmania's very own apple "guru" has agreed to run a grafting workshop for us in August this year.

The workshop will go for 4 hours, and include lunch. We'll visit a nursery or two to look at rootstock, do some practice grafting, then each participant will graft a few trees to take home and plant.

Cost will be \$70 per person (\$90 for non-members), which will include your own grafting knife to keep (Bob says any old kitchen knife will NOT do!). You'll need to let us know in advance if you're left handed, and we'll have the knives for you on the day. The fee also includes the rootstock.

Numbers will be strictly limited to 12 participants, so if you're interested in attending, let us know soon and we'll put your name on the list.



## Harvest notes

You've probably *almost* finished picking tomatoes and zucchini by now, although we have seen an unusually late run of these summer vegies. If there are still many green tomatoes on the vines, and you don't have good green tomato recipes, then you can pull the whole plant up by the roots, snip off any scruffy leaves, and hang the plant upside down in a sheltered spot. The remaining tomatoes will continue to ripen as they draw nutrients from the stem of the plant.

Most leafy vegies can be harvested a leaf at a time as soon as the leaves are big enough to bother with. This goes for silver beet, spinach, asian greens and herbs such as parsley and coriander. Generally its best to pick the outer leaves, and leave a few new inner leaves to unfurl and keep developing.

Pumpkins should be brought in under shelter now that frosts are a risk. If you're not eating them straight away, let the skin 'cure' in a sunny spot for a few days, and be careful not to break the stem off leaving a wound which might invite rot.

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