



Vanessa and Susan (above) enjoyed our grafting workshop, and are especially relaxed and happy now they've put away the VERY SHARP grafting knives, and are wrapping their grafts in magic green tape.

Using potatoes to tame weeds

Spuds are a great way to tame a weedy patch or turn lawn into a garden bed. Just slash grass or weeds short, sprinkle on some chicken poo or blood and bone, cover with wet cardboard or newspaper, then place your potatoes on top.

Then cover the spuds with straw or compost to a depth of at least 20cm. When the leaves emerge, (sometimes it takes a month) keep piling on more straw and compost, leaving just the top leaves exposed. Its important to keep the mulch layer thick enough to exclude light from the growing tubers, or many of them will turn green. A mix of straw and compost works better than just straw. At the end of the harvest you'll have a deeply mulched weed free bed ready for winter Brassicas!

Always use certified virus free seed potatoes, not wrinkly sprouted rejects from the cupboard. If you want to do some succession planting, plant Pinkeyes now for Christmas harvest, and then Kennebecs for keeping later.

Planting guide for September

Potatoes are great things to plant this month. If planting in a garden bed, plant deeply (20cm) and allow room (eg 40cm) between plants to hill soil up around the plants as they grow.

Seed of **carrots** and **beetroot** can be planted now, and don't forget to leave room for some succession planting every 3 – 4 weeks right through spring and summer.

Many leafies such as **lettuce**, **mizuna**, **bok choy**, **silver beet** will do well if sown now, specially as the soil is damp and soft. Feed these guys well with liquid fertiliser once they emerge for sweet results.

Its also not too late to plant **peas** and **broad beans** for harvest in Nov / Dec. They'll catch up to Autumn-planted ones pretty quickly, but might be a bit softer and prone to insect damage. Legumes are a great crop to grow before your summer cucurbits (zooks, cukes) or capsicum and chilli, which all like to be planted in December when the soil is warm.

And for those of you wanting to grow some **tomatoes** from seed, now is a good time to start them indoors in seed trays. Prick the seedlings out into individual pots when they have 2 true leaves.



Harvest notes

Leeks are thickening up well now. Keep checking as you harvest them to see if a flower stalk is starting to form inside. Once you notice this in one leek, its time to have a leek feast so you don't waste any! Always use a fork or trowel to lever leeks out of the ground, or you might leave the best bit in the ground.

You can pick a few **garlic** leaves without slowing down the plant too much, and use them like chives.

Carrots, **beetroot** and **parsnip** from winter beds can be picked as needed. Like the leeks, keep an eye on them to watch for any bolting as Spring warms up.

Winter **leafies** can be picked a leaf at a time, usually from the outside, leaving young leaves in the centre to develop.

Many Brassicas such as cabbage, cauli and broccoli will start to bolt in the next month. Try to pick beforehand, or if they bolt, leave for the yummy flowers which can turn a salad into "fairy food".

Broad bean tips and **pea** tendrils are gourmet tucker too.

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HARVEST



The promise of Spring

We're both very happy to be back into gardening after our July break. Have you noticed the days getting a bit longer? And how everything has put on a growth spurt after the long awaited rain in August. Magic!

FIMBY is having a Spring growth spurt too, with new staff, new customers, new products in the pipeline . . .

But just feeling the sun on our backs as we weed around the garlic reminds us why we began this journey.

New members of the FIMBY team

We're delighted to welcome three talented, enthusiastic gardeners and all round great people to our team. Ben (top), Danny (middle) and Hazel (bottom) will be running Garden Craft sessions with customers in the coming months, especially on our busy Saturdays.

We're also looking forward to handing over more operational tasks to these three, including new garden setups and design work.

All three new Fimbaristas come with plenty of ideas and experience gleaned from permaculture design courses and from creating their own home gardens.

Go team!



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Workshops and activities



Above: Bob Magnus supervises Vanessa and Ben cutting their own rootstock for grafting.

Our winter workshops have been all about fruit trees. First, planting, pruning and training with Nathan from Maple Grove Nursery and Marcus from the Botanical Gardens. Then grafting with Bob Magnus. Both very enjoyable and informative days. What else is coming up?

Cheese making with Claire Collins

Make your own Camembert and Ricotta
Saturday 25th September 10am – 3pm
A few places still available,
members have first option
\$50 members / \$60 non members

Next Network Gathering

Saturday 2nd October 10am Location TBA

Backyard rabbit culture

Late October / early November
Vegetarians may want to skip this bit! We're planning a workshop on backyard rabbit raising. Not the pet rabbit kind if ya know what I mean. We'll also cook up some rabbit for lunch on the day. Date and venue to be advised.

Hello's and Goodbye's

Its always a delight when we meet new people, help set up gardens with them, and start into the Garden Craft program. We've welcomed lots of new people recently, and expect to stay in touch with most people as they complete the Garden Craft program. But next month we sadly say goodbye (for now) to Vanessa who is moving to Singapore with her family. Have a great sojourn, and see you in a few years for some more gardening!

