



SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS

NEWSLETTER NO: 104 – JULY 2012

<http://www.seeog.org.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Southendfoodgrowersandproducers>

https://www.facebook.com/?ref=tn_tnmn#!/groups/43705483846/



Soil Association

SEEEOG was formed in 1994, to promote the principles of organic gardening by:

- Composting organic waste
- Protecting wildlife
- Reducing pollution
- Encouraging species diversity

Membership is currently £8.00 per annum, £12.00 family.

Is your local school a member of SEEEOG? If not, we offer free membership on receipt of application form!

Venue

Cheryl Centre, Growing Together Community Gardens, 47 Fairfax Drive, Southend-on-Sea SS0 9AG (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase) - Growing Together is a one-acre community garden and allotment project, primarily supporting adults with mental health needs and learning disabilities; and also educating the public and broader community on organic vegetable growing and all things sustainable. They also have a training centre with all mod cons.

Please park in Prittlewell Chase and use Fairfax Drive entrance.

Refreshments are available at all meetings. Talks are open to the public.

Please let us know if you have difficulty with transport and we will try to help.

Unless stated otherwise, our speakers start at 8.00pm, but Growing Together will be open from 7.00pm to allow members to browse our Library, etc.

The next committee meeting is on Wednesday 11 July, 7.30pm at Jane's. Please notify Graham Oster-Ritter on grahamoster@aol.com if you wish to receive your newsletter by post/email, or to change your email address.

SEEEOG Group Nights/Events/News

Our AGM starts at 7.30pm sharp on Monday 16 July and we look forward to seeing as many members as possible at Growing Together. The month of July is also the time when we must think about re-joining SEEEOG (and even introducing a friend, relative or neighbour!) We have listed some of the benefits – can you think of any more?

- Discussion and advice with gardening problems
- Six informative newsletters per year
- Speaker at each bi-monthly meeting and opportunity to associate with like-minded people
- Books/publications/leaflets on relevant topics at each meeting
- Excellent selection of library books available to borrow at meetings
- Plants (sometimes produce) available to buy at meetings
- Outings to places of interest/events
- Free membership to schools!
- Reduced membership fee for families!
- Facility of SEEEOG website for placing events, etc.
- Increased self-confidence?

NFU Mutual in Chelmsford is proud to be working with South East Essex Organic Gardeners.

Call our friendly team for an insurance quotation on **01245 898425**

Agent of The National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society Limited.



Thoughts on Capel Manor trip.....

'The visit to Forty Hall Farm was quite inspiring, with community response to the vineyard project and the orchard. Good to see farmed animals ranging about, but most of all the thrust of the farm towards community and locally grown food. This will enable a lot of partnership working and perhaps a design for the future with community involvement; perhaps a project for Garden Organic and partner with the Soil Association with their local food initiative from Monty (this am) on radio. The potential for courses and visits is obvious and the grounds and gardens could make good days out, courses, events, WWOOFing etc. It was good to have Kate McGeevor to guide us round and we should definitely return and keep in touch with this potentially very progressive project.

Capel Manor was interesting enough, and the trials suffered from the academic year and working within confines affecting the thrust of some of the trials; very good displays along Sunflower Street - a very good size for an afternoon, strolling through varied gardens, from student designers and ex students, much to give thought to and look at further. A very 'near' trip, a most excellent day out to two close and working together places of growing and husbandry.

A short appreciation of the day out, thanks from Ron and Ane'

'Hi Carole, It was good to see you and (Vic) again on Saturday. I enjoyed the trip. Thoughts on day: FARM 1. Clydesdales were massive; the one standing up, its head nearly going through ceiling because so tall. The one lying down was the same width as the coach. They looked great. 2. Piglets of Saddlebacks were happy. 3. Llamas keep out foxes (they are supposed to). 4. Nature reserve looked good - needs work + ranger or warden + work parties or rural estate management. 5. Food projects need natural wild food + more (farm) animals + allotments (possibly). GARDENS 1. Bumblebees feeding in abundance, even during dull cool conditions; Red Admiral butterfly out in sun. 2. Smooth newts, a pair in wild pond in experimental garden + Ragged Robin plants etc. 3. Ruin look garden had 6 smooth newts and about 100 common frog tadpoles. 4. 10 lb + Koi carp in two ponds. 5. Natural wild species looked brilliant, Ragged Robin, Ox-Eye daisies and (Crested Dog's-Tail?), together. 5. Gardens were peaceful and therapeutic. Brilliant day, thanks. Best wishes from Simon.'

'Thank you for a great day out at Capel - it brought back lots of memories!!
Anji Stratton'

'Thanks again for super day on Saturday, most enjoyable,
Pat'

'We (SEEWEN ladies plus friend), all really enjoyed the day (especially as we were blessed with such a beautiful warm day) and thought it was very good value for money. The talk and walk around the farm was really interesting and I think everyone has now got a soft spot for piglets after seeing them charge over to us, lose interest quickly and then rush off for some mischief elsewhere. They reminded Carol and me of little children on the playground from our teaching days!!

What a lot to see at Capel Manor! Having perused all the Trial beds I think I may have to subscribe to Which Gardening magazine to see the results of all their interesting trials. We came away with lots of inspiration and ideas not only for our own gardens but also for our Community allotment and also with our souls refreshed with all the lovely fresh air and beautiful plants. Oh ... and also we thought the food at Capel Manor was very good and very reasonably priced. The sit down at the end of the afternoon with a nice cuppa and a chat about everything was very therapeutic.

Thanks to Carol and Sharon, Penny and I also had the opportunity to learn or refresh our crochet skills on the way home and all managed to do at least one "Granny Square" Bonus! Many thanks, Pauline'

'We also enjoyed Capel Manor, even though the manor house was shut! Still, plenty to see and the kids loved the maze, reptile house, animals and the 'pretend bungalows', meaning the backdrop to the small display gardens. By the Manor House, in the converted stables, they had a variety of lizards, insects and tortoises; I believe it was open for a couple of hours in the afternoon - Elaine'

You can read about the Housewarming at Forty Hall & Estate at this link
http://www.fortyhallestate.co.uk/whats-on/events/the_housewarming)

Monday 16 July: AGM at 7.30pm followed by normal Group Night!

Please note that we will be holding our AGM before Andrew Henderson's presentation.

This is usually brief but it is your forum for commenting on how SEEOG is performing and what you wish to see happening in the next year. It is therefore helpful if as many members as possible attend so that your views are made known. We also look forward to welcoming Clare Withall, NFU Mutual. And please note that we are still looking for a new Treasurer without whom SEEOG will not be able to continue!

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last AGM
3. Chairman's report
4. Treasurer's report
5. Election of Officers
6. Election of Committee Members
7. Any other business

'From selection to consumption, a seeds story' presented by Andrew Henderson

Andrew is an Organic Crop Specialist at Rijk Zwaan UK Ltd and said he will include a bit about RZ/Tuckers Seeds, breeding, species available, sowing and seed storage.

<http://www.rijkszwaan.co.uk/wps/wcm/connect/RZ+UK/Rijk+Zwaan/home>

Monday 17 September

'Nurturing Health Project led by Milton Community Partnership - promoting the growing of fresh fruit and vegetables in the community, growing productive trees in community spaces in urban Southend-on-Sea, applying permaculture in practice' presented by Matt King, Chair of Milton Community Partnership.

Growing Together is doing a £3 per week vegetable bag scheme - organically grown vegetables and fruit grown on site by their members (with mental health problems & learning disabilities). Just go to the site (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase) to order your weekly bag. Open Mon - Fri 9 am - 4 pm.

Monday 19 November

Firstly, Dan Fisk has apologised for being unable to do the talk on his apprenticeship at Audley End. 'We are pretty pushed here at the moment. With Mike (Thurlow) leaving soon, the glass houses being refurbished and being a gardener down, we've got a lot on our plate..... '

But, we have great pleasure in welcoming (Dr) Daniel Hale, Progressio's Head of Campaigns, who led their delegation at Rio+20 (United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development). Progressio is the working name of the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR).

'I'd be super keen to come and speak with you all in November. I can speak about food and farming in the context of Rio20? I have an article in (today's) Conference magazine, **Outreach**, if you fancy finding out what's going on?' <http://www.stakeholderforum.org/fileadmin/files/OUTREACHDIALOGUEDAY3.pdf>

But, can we make Rio+20 matter? World leaders in Rio responded to the global crisis by sticking their heads firmly in the sand. However, there are things that the UK Government can do now to turn this disappointing deal into ambitious commitments at home

[http://www.foe.co.uk/news/rio20_outcome_36239.html?](http://www.foe.co.uk/news/rio20_outcome_36239.html?ic_number=595681&m_sourcecode=LM1206274&product=NEWS&utm_source=lyris&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email&hq_em=carolshorney@hotmail.com&MID=1811026&hq_e=el&hq_m=1814129&hq_l=4&hq_v=235f9abde3)

http://www.foe.co.uk/news/rio20_outcome_36239.html?ic_number=595681&m_sourcecode=LM1206274&product=NEWS&utm_source=lyris&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email&hq_em=carolshorney@hotmail.com&MID=1811026&hq_e=el&hq_m=1814129&hq_l=4&hq_v=235f9abde3

A Pocket Guide to Plants and Gardening - Book Offer

'I just wanted to send over a quick email regarding our 2012 gardening book release: *A Pocket Guide to Plants and Gardening*. We feel this book would be a great fit for your organisation and would be delighted to offer you a 50% discount on any orders for this book.

From the author of the best-selling *Kids in the Wild Garden* and *Kids in the Garden* (already on our Sales Table), *A Pocket Guide to Plants & Gardening* is a beautifully illustrated, informative reference book, designed to provide ready, simple answers to all the basic questions about plants. This mini encyclopaedia is a treat for anyone interested in plants and gardening and explains in a simple way some of the puzzles of the plant world.

To order with this half price discount, simply email me at jess@blackdogonline.com with your delivery address and the book(s) will be despatched with an invoice.

Please just shout if you have any queries and I look forward to hearing from you!

All the best, Jess'

Allotments

A film Graham Burnett created about the campaign to save Springfield Drive allotments in 2005 at

<http://www.facebook.com/l/xAQHCN075/www.youtube.com/watch?v=xz6ahuijts4&feature=youtu.be>

"Selling allotment produce, is it legal, is it right?" <http://www.organiclea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/sellingallotmentproduce.pdf>

Any apples in Southend?

Earlier this week we heard from Andrew Tann, from Crapes Fruit Farm, near Aldham, a long-standing friend of ours, or rather SEEOG's <http://www.england-in-particular.info/goods/g-case1-22.html>

'Not a daft question. We have less than 10% here - like much of Eastern England and Northern Europe.'

'It seems that several coincidental factors had pre disposed the trees to a modest crop expectation. Frost in North Essex on the morning of Good Friday and again 16th May has overridden everything else to blame! Northern Europe, Poland and North Germany, all similarly without'

Please let Andrew know the current situation in your patch, if you haven't already done so, andrew.tann1@virgin.net

Incidentally, one of Maiké's correspondents, John Beswick, says he continues to get reports from up and down the country of very poor yields of pears, plums and apples with suggestions that heavy thinning will be needed next year!

Maiké reports: 'For the first time and for the first time in the living memory of the previous owners, our Norfolk Beefing does not bear a single apple. However, this is not the whole picture. The Warner's King and Beauty of Kent are laden and so are a few others. I think the pattern of a very warm March and cold frosty weather afterwards affected some of the apples according to flowering time and position in the garden. We have no apricot or peach whatsoever. A few cherries and greengages, not as many cherry plums and sloes as in previous years'

And from Hadleigh, Graham said: 'Now that I have looked properly, I realise that I have very few apples on my trees (or plums or pears or cherries). I put this down to biennial bearing as I had such a good crop last year although it could be due to the low rainfall in the autumn.'

From Southend, Ann and Syd say 'Our Cox apple tree is empty but the Discovery and Bramleys have plenty of fruit on them.'

No, said Mo Perkins at Hilltop Farm, Benfleet! She said her Bramleys are nil, with eating better but not good.

Apple Weekend 2012

The 3rd Annual Essex Apple Weekend is scheduled for Saturday 20th to Sunday 21st October 2012. It promises to be an exciting celebration of apple related learning, food, crafts, fun and games! Trust Links will be opening up the historic St Lawrence Orchard on Eastwoodbury Land again, offering the opportunity to sample apples from many Essex varieties and further afield and drink freshly pressed apple juice. They will also be opening the Growing Together gardens, offering a café, plant sales and activities for all ages. Trust Links looks forward to working with SEEOG, South East Essex Women's Environmental Network and Southend in Transition again this year.

Keep an eye on the SEEOG and the Trust Links website www.trustlinks.org for more information nearer the time. Save the dates in your diary!

Farmers' Markets 2012

- **Leigh-on-Sea** at Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road: Friday 20 July, Friday 24 August, Saturday 22 September, Friday 26 October, Saturday 17 November and Saturday 22 December, 09:00 – 12:00
- **Rochford** in the WI Hall, Market Square on (Saturday) 7 July, 4 August, 1 September, 6 October, 3 November and 1 December, 09:30 – 12:30
PS: The August booking at Rochford looks uncertain, as Carole is now 'double-booked', unless we can find a replacement to help Violet. Please let us know asap!

Friends of Yalding Organic Gardens

As some members will be aware, Garden Organic no longer operates at Yalding Organic Gardens, having withdrawn from the project in 2008. The gardens continue to be owned by the Congelow Trust and information on the gardens can currently be found at <http://www.foyog.org/> The 'Friends' (aka John Tate, who so beautifully looks after our website) has been formed with the intention of bringing together all those who have a love of and an interest in the Gardens; to show their support; to explore the possibilities, and to work towards securing a sound and sustainable future for them. You can read John's piece on the June 2012 Open Day: Observations and thoughts for the future at <http://www.foyog.org/2012/06/june-2012-open-day-observations-and-thoughts-for-the-future/>
Website: foyog.org FOYOG Sign-up: foyog.org Twitter: twitter.com/FOYOG Facebook: facebook.com

Garden Organic Advice and News

With the school holidays rapidly approaching, we think that GO's Gardening Activities will be ideal for use by families, as well as schools and community groups. Ideal for use by schools, community groups and families, these downloadable resources in PDF format comprise Construction Projects, Games, Growing Activities, Planning, Templates and Wildlife projects.

http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/activities.php?dm_i=4UO,1RPI,C5PB7,6K99,1

GM news

GM Freeze understands EU Commissioner Dalli intends to table a proposal to introduce a threshold for unapproved, untested, unlabelled GMOs in food imports.

The suggestion has already been rejected by the German authorities but, as the UK Government pressed hard for this to happen last year, we need to try to prevent any proposal going forward.

Please take a moment to write to your MP, asking her/him to write urgently to Defra Secretary of State Spelman and insist any such proposal is rejected.

Background to this action, points for letters and related background to the introduction of a similar threshold for animal feed last year can all be found at <http://www.gmfreeze.org/actions/15/>

PS - have you visited the Clips and videos section of their website at <http://www.gmfreeze.org/why-freeze/videos-and-clips/>

And Maiké sent us an email about an American medical article on GM, which seems to hint at serious concerns about allergies etc. The link to the article is at <http://www.aaemonline.org/gmopost.html>

Love Food Hate Waste

Remember their visit last November? 'The Bite' is the Love Food Hate Waste newsletter and you can sign up to future issues by registering at <http://lovefoodhatewaste.us1.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=65343110dd35be920e719fccd&id=0493e35f5d>

Manure

1. Pam Mitchell, The Grange, Murrells Lane, Hockley (Tel. 01702 207491) has a very good, old supply of manure. If you ring her first, giving a couple of days' notice, she will arrange for a load to be brought to the gate to ease bagging up.

2. We have another provider of free manure, chemical free, in Barling, near Wakering.
Tel. 01702 219835

3. Julie Davis has a large, well rotted manure pile in Great Wakering, ready to be taken away and put to good use, with good vehicle access. You can help yourself to a bagful, a car load or a lorry load if you want it, but please contact her first to arrange a time as her yard is kept locked for security reasons. Julie says she can't say it's organic, but she has run her land along organic guidelines, so there have been no

sprays, medicines, etc. used and all their livestock were fed on organic feed, with no growth promoters or hexane, so it is completely safe for organic vegetables, etc. Tel: 07742107855

4. Our most recent provider is Hummerstone Farm, a family run farm near Billericay. They raise their own pigs and sheep producing free-range organic meat which they deliver locally every Saturday. They also have free-range chickens to provide fresh eggs. Parts are very well rotted, others partially, with manure from chickens, pigs and horses. They would ideally want it to go all in one lot as it is then easier to deliver within 15 miles of Billericay. Contact them on 07850789000 or on Facebook through their farm page <http://www.facebook.com/groups/Hummerstone.farm/>

Open Gardens in aid of Send a Cow: Saturday 7 July

9 Glenbervie Drive, Leigh-on-Sea - Strawberry teas and miniature gardens for sale

54 Glenbervie Drive, Leigh-On-Sea - Bric-a-brac and book sale 10.00am to 4.00pm

This year, there are two gardens in the road and, besides the wonderful colour of the flowers (should the weather ever oblige!), there are sales and demos and a good tea at No. 9!

Do go along if you can!

S E Essex Women's Environmental Network

A group of us is visiting Corinne's lovely garden in Latchingdon on Saturday July 14 and would welcome anyone who would like to join us. We plan to leave early afternoon and be back early evening - just time for a leisurely wander round the gardens followed by tea and cakes - what a treat! We'll car share so if you are interested please give Sharon a call on 079 4765 5947

Although Christmas is still a long way off we've been thinking about what we can do to 'reclaim' Christmas. That is to move the emphasis away from mass consumption - bigger and more gifts - more and more food - what a headache, especially if funds are short. We all agree that in the deep dark days of winter we need festivities and getting together for a jolly good time, but we'd like to take some of the stress out of the festival and return it to what it is intended to be. We've had a few ideas - a 'green' (but less commercial) Christmas fair and a good, second-hand toy sale has been suggested so far. Any other ideas welcome ... if you'd like to join a group who will be getting together to discuss what we can do then please call Eileen on 01268 752264.

SEEWEN will be taking a summer break for July & August - but will still be at the DIG IN allotment (contact Pauline on 01702 712596 if you are interested) - and in September we will be moving our monthly meeting, the third Thursday of each month, to Growing Together.

Eileen
Press/Publicity

SEEOG library

The SEEOG library is now installed in a cupboard in the Training Room at Trust Links (where we have our bi-monthly meetings). There will be a list of all books available for perusal and any book may be borrowed by members at a cost of 20p per book for each two month period. There are also back copies of The Organic Way, the PAN journals and Living Earth.

Audrey Slemmonds, Librarian

SEEOG talks

Wednesday 15 August, 8.00pm: The Royal Naval Association, British Legion Hall, London Hill, Rayleigh

SEEOG Website

<http://seeog.org.uk/>

John has put the pictures of Capel Manor Gardens up at <http://seeog.org.uk/seeog-trip-to-capel-manor-gardens-and-forty-hall-farm/>

Soil Association

The Soil Association have a number of e-newsletters to keep you up-to-date with the latest news and opportunities. 'Today's News', for example, is a daily bulletin provided by the Soil Association press office to keep you up-to-date with their latest news and all issues related to organic. They use a range of

sources, including the main national daily newspapers in England, Wales and Scotland plus key websites and farming publications.

<http://www.soilassociation.org/home/todaysnewslogin>

And their column 'July in the garden' is at <http://www.soilassociation.org/groworganic/july>

Subscription renewals

Your subscription is due on 1st July. The Committee have decided that we will continue to give no receipt but we do now request that you complete your renewal form and either give to a Committee member or give or post to Graham, together with your cheque or cash. To avoid problems with members saying they have paid cash but Graham has no record of it, no subscription will be accepted without the completed form. This can occur on Group nights when there is a rush and he forgets to write down the details. If you lose your renewal form, Graham will have spares available on Group nights.

To avoid these problems, we have now decided that we will now offer the facility of Standing Orders (STO). If you wish to take advantage of this, please complete and return the STO form with your membership Renewal Form to Graham and you will be renewed automatically by your bank.

There is no trouble with cancelling your STO like there is with Direct Debits. Just notify your bank that you wish to cancel it and notify Graham that you have cancelled your STO.

If you use on-line banking, you can set up the STO yourself (as well as cancel it). The bank details are on the STO form and your reference will be your name.

TWIG Shop

TWIG can be found at the bottom of Hamlet Court Rd – a lovely double bayed shop with lots of character. TWIG – The only Way Is Green – started off as a funded project to raise awareness of energy efficiency and continues to be led by Trust Links. The project has now expanded and seeks to reduce not only energy use but food miles in promoting Essex food.

Cathy MacBride who now co-ordinates the shop is a self-confessed foodie and is passionate about using local ingredients. Although not an Essex girl – having only been in the County a mere 26 years – she believes that every County should be proud of the food they produce and Essex has plenty to shout about.

The shop sells a mix of products such as flour and apple juice from Chelmsford, jam and pickles from Heybridge, chutney from Leigh and of course Essex honey. Also available are fresh ingredients from Growing Together – the community garden of Trust Links. This month continues to see rhubarb and lettuces and the introduction of broad beans and more herbs.

TWIG is much more than just a shop though; many of the visitors come for advice, exchange of ideas and sometimes just a chat. The hub is used to collect information on other food producers who may want to sell their produce, to examine potential initiatives such a community bakery, community business kitchen. Evening get togethers are on the cards and lots of summer activities are being planned.

It's not just food that comes under the 'Made in Essex' banner, the shop is also promoting local products such as soaps, natural soy candles and jewellery. Books too are available from local authors and the shop is a member of Book Crossing where books can be picked up free, recorded on a website and then circulated around Southend, around Essex and eventually around the world.

TWIG – made in Essex – celebrating everything Made in Essex – celebrating Green Essex

TWIG 49-51 Hamlet Court Road, open Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat. 9.30-4.30

Websites & Information

1. The Huntington's Disease Association Southend Branch still needs all your stamps, which you can take/send to Pat (137 Rochford Garden Way, Rochford SS4 1QL); Tel. 01702 544606; email terrynelson123@btinternet.com <http://www.hda-southend.org.uk/>

2. Exposure to pesticides can harm bumblebee reproduction, research has shown. Scientists think the pesticides cut feeding rates, leading to fewer offspring being produced - with thanks to Maïke for sending us the following link: <http://planetearth.nerc.ac.uk/news/story.aspx?id=1248>

Publications

Our two regular copies of Garden Organic's The Organic Way (Summer) have arrived and will be in the Library, along with our usual store of back copies. Articles 'flagged-up' are Storing your harvest, Composting to suit you, Top tips for watering (!) and Members' survey results.

Tips and hints

' Compost for seed growing is easily manufactured using well-made garden compost which had plenty of seaweed minerals added during the compost-making process. In recent years I have discovered the value of comfrey leaves. Chopped up, mixed with peat (now using a more sustainable alternative!) and covered with black polythene (or into large compost bags, for example), this mixture soon rots into valuable potting material (over the winter, stored undercover). A dash of magnesium limestone and a touch of Back-to-Nature fertilizer (or similar) will grow plants free from disease, while drainage can be helped by also mixing in a small amount of perlite. I use one part of perlite to four parts compost.....'

Courtesy of 'Gardening without Chemicals' by Jack Temple, 1986

Wanted

A cutting of the herb Balm of Gilead for Carole, please

SEEOG Committee

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