



BRAIDGARLIC BULLETIN

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April 2019

Welcome to the BraidGarlic Bulletin

BraidGarlic is a co-op dedicated to the development of garlic as a crop for the Southern Tablelands.

Progress: the board has secured a plot on Little River Road, Braidwood. It was planted last weekend. Member contributions of 5kg of garlic each year will ensure the ongoing success of our Co-op. This garlic will be sold or used as seed stock for the next year's plot. More below

Festival News

Our garlic plot is in Little River Road, Braidwood..

This plot is planted with turban garlic which will be used for the benefit of our Co-op as well as for education of new and continuing members.

We will continue to support the Braidwood Garlic Festival

We are supporting the Bungendore Festival on the 27th May 2019

We will sponsor garlic categories at the Braidwood Show in 2020



Marketing News:

Dave spoke to the organiser of the Erskineville Growers Market in Sydney. The market is held each Saturday and, though less than a year old, is gaining traction. Dave explained to them that as ours is a seasonal crop we would not be able to attend until early next year and even then only once a month. Dave has hopes that members will be available to assist with stalls at this market.

Meanwhile we continue to have a presence at Tramsheds. However, we will propose to the organisers that BGGCL attends monthly from January 2019 until stock sells out (April 2019?), which will put less pressure on members to run that stall.

Establishing the BraidGarlic brand

The Marketing Committee will send members questionnaires in August/September to find out how much garlic the Co-op is likely to have to market to our existing clients and how many new clients can also be supplied.



Education

Value Adding Your Garlic

Left over garlic from planting material.

If you only planted the largest cloves from your planting material, then you will have quite a few undersized garlic cloves.

My research suggests:

Dried Garlic

Drying your cloves for use over the 'off season'
They can be packaged and used or sold.

Pickled cloves

Pickling cloves is a great way to preserve them for the 'off season'.

Garlic Oil

Making garlic oils can also be very rewarding.

Scapes: pickled

The first product of our garlic crop is the scapes (flower stalks which need to be pulled to ensure larger bulbs). One way to use these is to pickle them. They can also be packaged and sold.

It may be that your CoOp will have buyers for the raw scapes. We did have some interest last season.

Garlic Bulbs

Some members plait the leaves to create beautiful bunches of garlic bulbs. These can be quite lucrative because they present well and are used as gifts as well as for home consumption.

Diversifying our Garlic Varieties

Diversifying our garlic varieties so that we have broader customer bases is worth considering.

Members have tried Dunganski as well as the turban with some success in the past.

I have purchased seed stock for 10 different varieties from the standard turban that our Co-Op markets. I have plant them this season. Each of the varieties that I have purchased will give me indications of:

- Whether I can successfully grow that variety in my plot
- Whether the characteristics the variety is reported to have are reproduced in my plot
- Does my plot produce that variety in a good form: that is with large bulbs and large cloves

Each variety I have chosen to trial has a special quality, be it long storage, late variety, middle variety, strong flavour, specific use: good for salads, stews etc.

I have also selected from a variety of types of garlic: creole, turban, artichoke, dunganski, silverskin.. The more knowledge I gain of the different varieties' performance in my plot, the more comfortable I will be that the garlic that I am growing gives me the best value for the resources demanded to grow my crop. I'll report in the harvest edition how I went with these.

Do other members have thoughts on diversifying their garlic crop? Last year your CoOp grew turban and dunganski.

Education event:

Wendy has booked for the Food & Beverage Product Innovation and 'Premiumisation' event in ACT on May 29th. She will report back to members on relevant information gleaned from the event.

Useful links:

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/how-to-grow-great-garlic/news-story/910df0e4b1a80678a8798d2622183b69>
<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture/vegetables/commodity-growing-guides/growing-garlic-in-nsw>
<http://www.garlicaustralia.asn.au>



Each variety is unique

Garlic Facts:

You can battle both acne and cold sores with garlic, simply by slicing cloves in half and applying them directly to the skin. Hold for a bit—as long as you can stand!—and while the smell might not be the best, the antibacterial properties of the miracle plant will speed along the healing process.



Community billboard:

Quirky

The sticky juice that's in garlic cloves is often used as an adhesive, especially for delicate projects that involve fragile items like glass. You just need to crush the cloves to get to the sticky stuff which, despite its smell, works surprisingly well as a bonding agent for smaller jobs.

Rare Bee Sighting

I was recently privileged to see a Metallic Green Carpenter Bee in my neighbour's garden in Gundaroo. It is a huge bee. According to an eminent entomologist: "There is a small population in the National Botanic Gardens which has multiplied over that time and gone through at least 3 generations and we have a fair idea of their life cycle but have never found where they nest (the females drill holes in softish wood and rear their offspring in cells supplied with a paste of nectar and honey). They are not social like honey bees but often nest in close proximity to each other. This bee has been declared extinct in inland NSW, all of Victoria and South Australia except for Kangaroo Island where it has been studied and is on the States endangered list. We don't know where the Canberra bees came from and how long they had been in the gardens before I saw them (I think not long as they are so conspicuous). The gardens are a great home for them because of the abundance of food throughout the year from the succession of flowers on the natives including peas, sennas, croweas and rainforest trees etc. The bee is common on the coast north of Sydney, however, last spring I saw some males and females in Wombeyan caves NP feeding on Senna which is a prolific pollen producer. The disappearance of this bee from the inland is thought to be due to habitat loss from clearing and intensive agriculture and possibly the use of insecticides in flowering crops so your find is quite significant. So it would be useful to know if your bee was just passing through or is a locally breeding resident so if you could check the Croweas and any other plants in flower on warm days for the bee that would be very useful. The male bees only appear briefly in spring and have a short but merry life chasing females and maintaining territory."

Keep an eye out for this little critter:



The Garlic Plot in Braidwood

The Church Plot last year was very successful. Not only was it a good venue for members to meet and compare notes, but also for new members to get hands on experience of garlic growing. On top of that, the garlic from the plot netted a tidy income for the Co-op – Your co-op needs fund to allow it to build the infrastructure which will be vital to its success. Members expect us to have storage facilities and other such infrastructure and we can only supply this if we are financially successful. We cannot use the Church Plot this year so we planted in a paddock on Little River Road, Braidwood.

Using a member's garlic plot was deemed unacceptable because of the potential bio-hazard for the member and potential liability of our Co-op.

We will need members to assist with caring of our plot on a regular basis. We have purchased new seed, compost, mulch etc for it.

The plot was prepared for planting on Sunday the 28th April and the plot was fenced after planting.

Planting methods were discussed prior to planting. Members had differing approaches to how to get the cloves into/onto the ground. Consensus was that we would plant different beds (there are 6 of them and more to come) using the different methods used by members. Some of our most successful members make furrows in the bed and then place the cloves in them, pointy side up, then cover with mulch – no burying of the cloves. This method is very fast. They also used close spacing – 32 cloves to the square meter.

One member had tried a number of methods in previous years and noted no discernible difference in bulb size at harvest, except where scapes were not pulled. Not pulling scapes resulted in a reduced bulb size – which was expected.

Some members use offset planting, some members do 3 rows of garlic to the bed, and others do 4 rows. The prepared beds were wide enough to accommodate 5 rows, but this was not a preferred planting strategy. (5 rows of garlic to a bed might make accessing the middle row challenging).

A record was kept of which beds were planted in which way: cloves buried deep, cloves covered with soil, cloves not buried at all.

All rows were mulched with rice straw. At the end of this process there did not seem to be any difference in the way members did it. The mulch was applied very liberally and was teased out to be very loose, 12-15cm deep. The edges were rounded to discourage straw from moving with the wind.

All rows will receive the same cultivation attention, so we should see at harvest whether there is any difference in the resulting bulbs.



Events:

27 May – Bungendore Festival – BraidGarlic had a stall and members attended including Georgina and David. We expect to continue supporting this annual event and encourage members to do so as well.

Advertisements:

Thought for the month:

Time has a wonderful way of showing us what really matters.



Aussie Bee Hotel

handcrafted by
Venture Vale

Solitary bees and other beneficial insects inhabit urban environments, but their habitat can be limited. Your bee hotel is a way that you can ensure that these beneficials have a home in your backyard, on your balcony or in an outdoor corner of your space.

Please provide a water source in your environment and place your bee hotel anywhere in that space. The solitary bees and beneficial insects will make their homes in the holes in the wood and the spaces between the wood of your bee hotel. They will be safe secure and multiply.

Most of Australia's 1,500 odd native bee species are solitary; they do not have queens and workers; a female bee mates with a male and then builds an individual nest for her eggs

You can observe the many insects that nest in your hotel and become familiar with the solitary bees and insects that work so hard to pollinate our native vegetation.

Price: \$55 each

Our bee hotels weigh at least 3kg, collection is far better than postage,



Venture Vale: 668 Back Creek Road, Gundaroo NSW 2620

PLEASE Call first: 0406 375 091

Advertisements:

Artwork should be sent in .jpeg or .png format to whiskerw@gmail.com or mobilize

Rates:

	Members	Non Members
Small – 588x87	\$5	\$10
Med – 121x87	\$7	\$15
Large – 185x87	\$10	\$20

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