



Canadian Organic Growers  
 Cultivons Biologique Canada  
 Ottawa - St. Lawrence - Outaouais Chapter  
 Section d'Ottawa - Saint Laurent - Outaouais  
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SUMMER 2014



# Down to Earth

## Save Growing Up Organic!

**OUR FLAGSHIP PROGRAM IN OTTAWA NEEDS YOUR HELP TODAY**



**We have had a tremendous spring! Between April and the end of June we will have delivered over 150 workshops to 18 schools across the city, reaching over 1,200 children and youth with our garden programming!**

***But our core funding ends this July.***

We have been very fortunate to have had the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation for several years to support two part-time staff and several interns; now that this funding is coming to an end, we are working on our long-term sustainability, and also our immediate survival.

***We urgently need to raise at least \$25,000 to continue the program for another year.***

Over the past seven and a half years, GUO has partnered with 40 local schools to establish organic school gardens as learning grounds for environmental and health education. Each year GUO delivers over 120 workshops to students from kindergarten to grade 12, increasing their awareness about the impacts of their food choices on their health and the environment and providing them with tools to create sustainable change in their own communities.

GUO is a high demand project. Every year ten to twelve schools approach us with interest in joining the program. At the same time, we continue to work with over 25 schools year after year, reaching well over 1,000 students on a continual basis.

The program has many wonderful components, all delivered enthusiastically to support the provincial curriculum by a tiny staff of 4. We help schools to build organic schoolyard gardens and use those as hands-on outdoor classrooms; provide an impressive series of workshops designed to meet curriculum objectives; organize class field trips to organic farms; and much more. Learn all about the activities on the website at: <http://cog.ca/ottawa/growing-up-organic/>.

GUO has done a lot to become financially sustainable including connecting with businesses for sponsored rates on materials, and supporting schools in raising their own funds to cover garden costs. However, funding salaries is a tremendous challenge for many small grant-dependent charitable organizations.

***Keeping GUO alive in Ottawa represents our biggest and most important challenge yet. Can you help today?***

All donations over \$20 receive a tax deductible charitable receipt.

Charitable Registration Number – 13014 0494 RR0001

If you want to donate as an individual, through your business or organization, or even organize a pool where you work, it's all great. Every amount helps!

**Online/credit card or paypal account:** please click on any of the "Donate" buttons on our website welcome page at [www.cog.ca/ottawa](http://www.cog.ca/ottawa) and they will take you to our secure PayPal form.

**By phone/credit card:** please call this toll free number and tell them it is for "Growing Up Organic": 1-888-375-7383

**By cheque:** please write "For Growing Up Organic" in the notes line, and mail to this address: Canadian Organic Growers 7519-1145 Carling Ave. Ottawa, ON K1Z 7K4



**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!!!**

## Editor's Corner

Happy summer! I hope you all enjoyed our recent bout of hot weather. Having grown up on the prairies, I am not yet accustomed to the humid heat in this part of the country. Lucky for me, forecasters are predicting a milder-than-average summer.

Get ready for temperate picnics and relaxing afternoons on the patio! Whether you're planning to grill vegetables on the barbecue or throw together some fresh herb salads, I hope you'll enjoy the bold and refreshing flavours of organic summer produce. For cooking inspiration, check out our "Seasonal Bites" section (one of our recipes features a rather unlikely but surprisingly delicious ingredient).

Also contained in this issue: a look back at this spring's Organic Gardening in the City seminars, updates on the Senior Organic Gardeners program, and a special appeal for support from the folks at Growing Up Organic. I had the opportunity to see Alissa Campbell, project manager of Growing Up Organic, lead one of the seminars this spring. She made a thoroughly convincing case for the educational opportunities provided by school gardens. If you haven't already done so, I hope that you will take a moment to read the article on page one of this newsletter.

Best Wishes,

Molly Davidson

[mollycogoso@gmail.com](mailto:mollycogoso@gmail.com)

## Eco Farm Day 2015

It's time to start planning next year's Eco Farm Day! The Ramada Inn in Cornwall is reserved for Saturday, February 28, 2015. Local organic meat and vegetable producers are already growing ingredients for the highly-acclaimed lunch that is a staple of the event. But we also need a program, including speakers, panels, and (possibly) a keynote. If you would like to participate in planning the event (or you know someone who might be), please contact Gary Weinhold at 613-244-4000 x6 or [weinhold\\_g@yahoo.ca](mailto:weinhold_g@yahoo.ca).

## Organic Gardening in the City Seminars, 2014

This year's Organic Gardening in the City seminars were both fun and informative, garnering positive feedback from participants, instructors, and volunteers. Due to unseasonably cold weather, enrollment was not as high as we had hoped. Luckily, we were still able to break even. Most importantly, a great time was had by all!

Seminars were held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings throughout April.

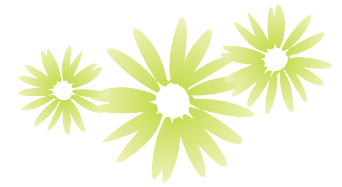
Our new location was Ottawa City Hall (110 Laurier West); participants were pleased with this clean, comfortable and centrally located site. Conference rooms were made cozy with cups of organic green tea and colourful COG displays. During each seminar's short intermission, participants perused our collection of books, magazines, and organic seeds for sale. Free pamphlets and back issues of relevant publications were also available. As an added bonus, one lucky participant was awarded a door prize at the end of each evening. For just \$20 (\$14 for students and seniors), attendees enjoyed quite an eventful two hours! At the same time, the atmosphere was relaxed and inviting. Several participants came for more than one seminar, braving the unpleasant weather to take part.

Seminars covered a wide range of topics. Through Powerpoint presentations, visual displays, and hands-on activities, this year's instructors engrossed participants in their material. Attendees asked insightful questions, shared relevant experiences, and left inspired.

We kicked things off with a seminar entitled *Organic Soil and Compost*, a joint effort by instructors Pat Lucey and Rob Danforth. Pat Lucey, an experienced organic gardener, has been teaching the fundamentals of organic growing in our seminars for a number of years. Rob Danforth is also a veteran *Organic Gardening in the City* instructor. In addition to the session on soil and compost, he taught the following seminars: *Organic Container Gardening* (a two-part seminar); *Designing an Organic Garden to Support Pollinators, Pest Eaters, and Pest Deterrents*; and *Prolonging and Winterizing an Organic Garden/Herbs & Edible Flowers*. Rob is a highly knowledgeable teacher, and his seminars were packed with tips and tricks to help gardeners of all skill levels.

*Growing Up Organic* program manager Alissa Campbell lead the first seminar, *Starting an Organic Garden at your School*. Alissa elicited lively conversation from her audience, comprised largely of teachers and parents. Participants were eager to discuss their observations regarding contemporary children's attitudes toward food and nutrition. Another first-time instructor, Telsing Andrews, also connected with her audience. In her seminar, *Organic Seeds, Germination & Seed Saving*, Telsing wanted to help give "the power of the seed back to the people." Discussing her audience, Telsing said, "my favourite part was when I could tell something clicked." David Hinks was the instructor for the very popular *Organic In-Ground Vegetable Gardening*. David's vast experience as an organic gardener shone through during his informative and engaging presentation.

Despite the uncooperative weather, all of the participants and volunteers who made it out to the seminars thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Survey responses, followup comments, and enthusiastic applause testified to this fact. On the whole, we consider this year's events to have been a success.



## Senior Organic Gardeners (SOG) Expands Roots in 2014

BY MARGARET TOWNSON-TOWNSON

*Margaret is the Lead Volunteer for Senior Organic Gardeners —  
she works with the SOG Team of volunteers and staff*

The great news from SOG is the number of seniors who are becoming excited about gardening veggies organically! We've heard time and again how much they want to grow good food!

More good news! SOG has been successful in drawing in funding for 2014 from New Horizons Seniors (a federal government program) and Community Foundation Ottawa. This has allowed us to hire a Project Manager, who is taking over the reins of visiting our 10 locations for planning, planting, monitoring, assisting with watering and weeding, and finally harvest celebrations and winter clean up.

Our funding permits SOG to expand to a full-year program to build interest and knowledge about organic gardening throughout the fall and winter. This is a great way to generate enthusiasm and increase knowledge and skills for the next growing season.

We have also been awarded a Canada Jobs Summer Student Intern for eight weeks in June and July, which is really awesome during the planting season when all hands are needed on deck! Welcome Wesley Petite to the SOG Team.

We still dream of building a strategic funding plan that will keep SOG working for many years to come, which would be funded by 500+ small local businesses making annual donations for 3 to 5 years. More on that to come. We do have a funding application to allow us to pull together a number of talented volunteers – grassroots of the community to build a sustainable funding plan for Senior Organic Gardeners!

Would you like to know where SOG is working? Here is the current list, which may have expanded by the time you read this: Longfields Manor in Barrhaven, Unitarian House in Westboro, The Perley & Rideau Veterans' Health Centre, Ottawa Community Housing buildings (Wellington Towers, Brooke Manor, Russell Manor, 800 St Laurent and Regina Towers). West End Villa and Good Companions have recently brought the SOG locations to ten!

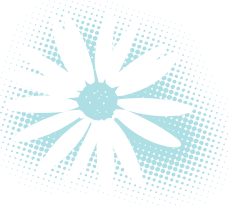
Who is involved in SOG? Adèle McKay, our Project Manager, is a talented, experienced and well-qualified gardener. Adele has recently joined our team, which includes Rob Danforth, our organic growing advisor; Wesley Petite, our Summer Student Intern; and David and Margaret Townson who are also SOG volunteers. Sara Holzman also helps us, as do a number of other volunteers. We are engaging with community partners for our organic seed sale in the spring, with seniors' locations and with organic farmers and gardeners. We are gearing up to thank them from the heart on our website: [www.cog.ca/ottawa/senior-organic-gardeners/](http://www.cog.ca/ottawa/senior-organic-gardeners/)

We hope to meet many of you as we bring the SOG Booth to community events during the spring, summer and fall. You'll be invited to take a copy of our new brochure, which was again made possible by a COG OSO CSA farmer and media owner!

We are now working hard on funding for 2015. More on that in the next issue of Down to Earth. We are deeply grateful to so many people, businesses and organizations for all their contributions in 2014! Thank you one and all!



SOG photos by Wesley Petite



## Interview With A Volunteer: Telsing Andrews

We at *Down to Earth* are proud to introduce our volunteer feature. In each issue, we hope to interview one volunteer who has benefited the Ottawa organic gardening community. In this edition, we speak to Telsing Andrews, who volunteers in COG OSO's demonstration garden at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm. Telsing also owns a nursery, Aster Lane Edibles, and coordinates the Edible Ottawa Gardeners Group, which can be found on Facebook.

### **Can you tell us a little bit about the demonstration garden?**

It is a hidden gem off the parking lot of the Museum of Agriculture. Between two trimmed cedar hedges is a slightly scaled up version of a sub/urban yard with fruit trees, raised beds, compost containers, a xeriscape bed, rock garden, pollinator plants, herbs and more. Experienced and novice gardeners alike support each other to become better stewards of the earth and to swap garden stories.

### **What made you want to volunteer?**

I've always loved strolling through this garden whenever I visited the Experimental Farm. When I heard there was a possibility of being part of that, I happily volunteered.

### **What do visitors take away from a visit to the garden?**

It is a lovely place to visit. I've seen toddlers zipping around the rock paths of the dry garden beds, kids stopping to point out a bee and adults asking the volunteers about this or that plant or what to put in their garden. There is a bench to sit for a while and take it all in. Ultimately, we hope that it will give home gardeners ideas to realize their organic oasis.

### **What are some of the questions and comments you frequently hear from visitors?**

There are some striking plants there like giant colewort and red leaf rose so we get asked what they are. Other than the names of the plants, I get asked for suggestions about what they should do in their gardens. Sometimes people also want to share plant stories past and present, whether to complain about Japanese beetles or to revel in a flower they remember from their childhood.

### **How much knowledge did you have about organic gardening before you started volunteering? What have you learned since you started?**

I had a lot of knowledge about organic growing and plants before I started volunteering. One of things I learn from working in other gardens, including this one, is how the environment can make a difference. My garden has different soil, a different water table and some different plants. Observing what works in this garden expands my understanding more generally.

### **Have you noticed any changes in public attitudes toward organic gardening in recent years?**

I think people have overall warmed up to the idea of organic gardening, especially since the cosmetic pesticide ban has forced some people to rethink how they get their gardens to work for them.



### **How has volunteering changed your life?**

I'm certainly busier! It's connected me to like-minded people with whom I can share my passion.

### **What's new in the garden?**

Last year, we added raised beds in the veggie area including a high raised bed that is more accessible. We also replaced the compost bins that were on their last days. This year, we are starting to add more edibles into our design to reflect the growing interest in reconnecting with the land and having fresh, organic food just outside your door.

To learn more about the demonstration garden, email Telsing Andrews at [ottawagardener@live.com](mailto:ottawagardener@live.com), or contact the COG OSO branch. For more information about Aster Lane Edibles, visit [asterlanedibles.ca](http://asterlanedibles.ca).

**CONCOURS DE PHOTOS**

Notre concours de photos a pour but de rendre hommage aux **AGRICULTEURS(TRICES)**, ces artisans(es) de la terre, et à leur mode de vie.

On vous invite à capturer l'originalité des habitants, des endroits et des événements propres à **l'AGRICULTURE LOCALE** et à la **VIE RURALE**.  
(dans un rayon de 250 km de la ferme MARIPOSA).

12 photos seront sélectionnées et exposées dans notre salle à manger.  
**GAGNER** un dîner à la ferme, comprenant un séjour d'une nuit à notre gîte.

envoyez vos photos à : [twalker@mariposa-duck.on.ca](mailto:twalker@mariposa-duck.on.ca)  
échéance : le 30 septembre 2014

**MARIPOSA**  
[www.mariposa-duck.on.ca](http://www.mariposa-duck.on.ca)

## Steering Committee Report

*At last, my garden has come along; my dreary days are over, and life is like a song.* (Thanks to Etta James for that – I hope she wouldn't mind the editorial liberties I took with her song!)

Spring was a long time coming this year in Eastern Ontario and the Outaouais. If you are like me, you may have lost some trees this winter, sadly, they say it was a hard one especially for the conifers (except for the parts buried under 2-3 feet of snow!) How wonderful now to be eating this year's lettuce, spinach, radishes and arugula, and to see the carrots, peas, potatoes, and beets showing such enthusiasm.

*As a charity we do an amazing amount of work as a primarily volunteer-driven organization, and programs like Growing Up Organic do amazing amounts of work and touch so many lives with very little funding.*

The COG OSO Steering Committee has had a busy Spring, and we have some very exciting news up our sleeves – it's been hard to keep this under wraps but just know that we are working on a completely new angle on our classic **Fest of Fields** foodie event in September. Watch out for updates on our website: [www.cog.ca/ottawa](http://www.cog.ca/ottawa), and in the media. You might want to reserve your afternoon for Sunday September 21<sup>st</sup>!

We've got lots of other things going on too – have you been to our **Organic Demonstration Garden** yet this year? It's near the peony garden

on the site of the Canada Agriculture Museum, at the top end of Prince of Wales Drive. Telsing Andrews and the other volunteers have been doing a wonderful job, and if you are interested in helping out you can contact Johanna, our new Coordinator of Volunteers, at [johanna.cornelissen@yahoo.com](mailto:johanna.cornelissen@yahoo.com). For that matter, if you feel like helping out with any of our activities she's the one to contact.

You'll notice on the front page of this issue we have a special feature urgently requesting support for **Growing Up Organic** (GUO), our flagship



program. This amazing program is making truly meaningful, tangible differences in the lives of hundreds of our children and youth in the region.

Last year, we were able to expand GUO to Ottawa's surrounding counties, and are excited that our program is now offered over an area over 8,000 square kilometers in Eastern Ontario, in both urban and rural schools, across 7 school boards!

**Unfortunately, however, GUO is now in jeopardy because our core funding is running out.**

The Ontario Trillium Foundation grant that made it possible for us to deliver the program in Ottawa since 2007 runs out at the end of June.

As a charity we do an amazing amount of work as a primarily volunteer-driven organization, and programs like Growing Up Organic do amazing amounts of work and touch so many lives with very little funding.

It comes down to this: we need the support of everyone reading this – please give what you can to keep GUO delivering precious discoveries to our region's children and youth. We need to raise a minimum of \$25,000, and we need to do it by the beginning of the next school year in September.

I believe in this program. When you see how this program brings learning to life you will too. Please, please, donate now. Details are on the cover article of this issue.

Thank you.  
Susan Preston

**PHOTO CONTEST**

Our photo contest would like to pay tribute to those  
**ARTISTS of the Earth, THE FARMERS,**  
and to their way of life.

You are invited to capture the unique people, places and  
events that illustrate the essence of  
**LOCAL FARMING, FOOD and RURAL LIFE**  
(within 250 km of MARIPOSA).

Twelve photos will be selected and exposed in our dining room.  
Winner will get a FREE Sunday Lunch and a one-night stay at our cabin.  
email photos to: [iwalker@mariposa-duck.on.ca](mailto:iwalker@mariposa-duck.on.ca)  
deadline: September 30, 2014

**MARIPOSA**  
[www.mariposa-duck.on.ca](http://www.mariposa-duck.on.ca)

## The Intelligent Gardener: Growing Nutrient-Dense Food

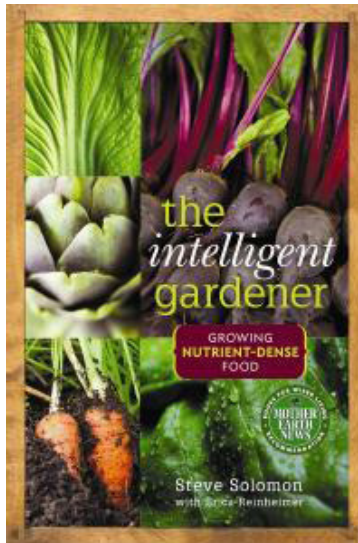
By Steve Solomon, with Erika Reinheimer, New Society Publishers: Gabriola Island, BC, 2013

REVIEWED BY SALLY LUCE

When I saw this book on the Ottawa Library website, complete with a *Mother Earth News* seal of approval, I downloaded it, eager to learn more. Solomon makes a case for using detailed annual analyses of the soil in your home garden or small acreage to calculate the soil amendments needed each year. He says that these amendments will improve nutrition in your produce.

I found this book both interesting and frustrating. It is interesting because Solomon explains how different types of soil are formed. He describes the complex interrelationships among many soil components, and shows how to calculate the amounts of soil amendments needed to ameliorate deficits and excesses of major soil nutrients and trace elements. Solomon provides worksheets to help the reader complete these calculations. There are also interesting discussions of how climate, irrigation and previous uses of a garden area can affect the soil's components.

Solomon cautions that there is no one perfect soil and puts limits on amendments, even when analyses would suggest larger amounts, so as not to shock the soil and plants. He points out that all of his testing and analysis may not be worthwhile for very small gardens, and in this case he recommends



newsociety.com

a soil amendment formula that could be used in most gardens to good effect.

My frustrations were numerous.

First, while Solomon extensively discusses how to amend soils, he only gives anecdotal evidence supporting the link between amending soil and gaining more nutrients in garden produce. He does note that the size, taste and quality of his own vegetables improved with soil amendments and that the protein content of some of his vegetables increased. He provides no general research evidence to show the extent to which his recommended amendments would add nutrition to plants grown in a variety of soils and climates. I would have been more persuaded to try his process if he had provided more than examples of the effects of his amendment formula on his own flourishing gardens in the west coast (where he used to live) and Tasmania (where he currently lives).

He says that the extensive amending needed for the optimum nutrition he recommends would not be cost-effective for commercial growers. While great nutrition is arguably priceless, what he recommends may be too costly and time-consuming even for hobby gardeners.

A second frustration occurred after I'd gone through several technical chapters explaining how to evaluate my soil's needs using the hard-to-source Mehlich 3 soil test. Solomon says this is the only test that should be used with his formula, but later, in Chapter 8, he says that this test has important limitations when assessing calcium-rich soil with neutral or higher pH readings. This is the type of soil many of us have in Eastern Ontario! For these conditions, he recommends an additional soil test and provides additional calculations to find the right amount of soil amendments needed.

My third frustration regarded the lack of discussion of whether or how his recommended soil amendments fit into organic gardening practices. He does say that early writing on organic gardening practices relied too much on compost and failed to take into account differences in soils and hence other amendments that might be needed.

Solomon does devote an entire chapter to compost, which he views as a necessary but not sufficient soil amendment. He discusses methods for improving and using compost. For certain soil conditions, he often recommends incorporating specific types of organic matter, such as seed meal, or minerals, such as rock phosphate, in the early stage of composting. He also says that different soils need different amounts of compost.

As a hobby gardener, this was my first introduction to an extensive explanation of the complexity and interrelationships of major soil nutrients. Despite my frustrations with the book, I am now curious about soil analyses and the possible effects of using more than the compost I now use.

Before I would follow Solomon's approach, I would want more assurance that annual testing and extensive soil amendments in my garden would substantially boost the nutrition in my vegetables.



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# HIDDEN HARVEST BEGINS ITS THIRD YEAR IN OTTAWA

BY LAURA MONCION

“What do you think this is?” Katrina Siks, co-founder of Hidden Harvest, asks the semi-circle of would-be volunteers. She passes around a spiky brown object that she found in a local park while walking her dog. Katrina points to the kernel, almost hidden by the prickly tendrils: a small Turkish hazelnut.

Hidden Harvest is the two-year-old brainchild of Katrina Siks and Jason Gurlough. The project is dedicated to harvesting fruit and nuts from Ottawa trees, turning what had previously been an annoying mess into food for the people. They organize harvests of food-bearing trees in 23 wards across Ottawa, from Cumberland to areas around Carp and Richmond, with the help of an ever-growing army of volunteers. Each harvest is coordinated by a neighbourhood harvest leader; depending on the size of the harvest, groups can be as small as two or as large as fifteen.

The project began when the City of Ottawa released their tree data in 2012, revealing that some 4,000 fruit and nut bearing trees were not being picked. The majority

of the trees now harvested are on public land. Hidden Harvest has the benefit of an official agreement with the City of Ottawa, allowing them to harvest public food-bearing trees without any legal restrictions.

Many homeowners with fruit- and nut-bearing trees on their property have

also reached out to Hidden Harvest to help them with harvesting. In the case of a privately-owned tree, ¼ of the harvest goes to the homeowner, ¼ to the nearest food shelter, ¼ to the volunteers, and ¼ to Hidden Harvest.

Among the most common food-bearing trees in Ottawa are the serviceberry (also known as the Saskatoon berry), which grows in the form of short, bush-like trees and produces small red-purple berries; the Turkish hazelnut, which usually grows in the form of taller trees; black walnuts; and apples, harvested in vast quantities in the fall.

Besides the harvest itself, there are workshops throughout the season — past workshops have included DIY canning and preserving, tree grafting, and maple sap tapping. Since 2013, Hidden Harvest has also been selling fruit- and nut-bearing trees, helping them reach their goal of fostering the largest urban orchard in Eastern Canada. Although it may require a practiced eye to see the hazelnut inside a prickly shell, we all benefit when we learn how to identify the organic food that’s already all around us.

If you would like more information or to get involved, see Hidden Harvest’s website: <http://ottawa.hiddenharvest.ca>

*Besides the harvest itself, there are workshops throughout the season — past workshops have included DIY canning and preserving, tree grafting, and maple sap tapping.*



## A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON SENIOR ORGANIC GARDENERS

*Wesley Petite is a Summer Student Intern working with SOG. After his first day on the job, he joined SOG volunteers, helping seniors at Longfields Manor plant their Aromatic Terrace Herb & Edible Flowers Garden! Here are some of his thoughts and first impressions.*

The Senior Organic Gardeners (SOG) program helps to develop growth on many levels. People living in a Seniors’ Residence are given the opportunity to interact with trained gardeners, plant visually stimulating and aromatic plants, and enjoy the sweet feeling of dirt between their fingers as they take part in an organic experience. The interaction and experience of gardening brightens the day of these residents, exposing them to new learning opportunities and therapeutic horticulture.

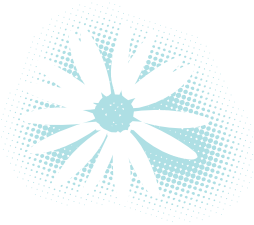
Horticultural therapy, the goal-based use of therapeutic horticulture, has been used in Canada for over 60 years. Positive developments resulted from its use with hospitalized veterans of WWII. Numerous studies have confirmed that the physical activity and cognitive stimulation involved in gardening helps to maintain a consistent level of physical and emotional well-being. The adaptability of the gardening process ensures that those of all physical abilities and gardening skill levels can take part; it never demands too much from anyone, yet it presents an interesting and rewarding experience to all.

The SOG program is one step towards a larger effort to create therapeutic habits and environments in seniors’ homes. This will ultimately benefit families as well. The SOG program offers an opportunity for interaction and conversation with the residents of the seniors’ homes. Although these are only brief encounters on a bi-weekly basis, the experience of the gardening period lifts the spirits of residents and allows them to share their stories while they contribute to the beautification of their home.

The benefits will be evident when the family arrives for a visit and finds their loved one with a smile on their face and a herb or vegetable growing in the garden that they helped to plant.

Through these activities, residents are able to take part in the aesthetic of their homes, which has the possibility of increasing their feeling of comfort and belonging. Getting in touch with nature is something that benefits all people, and these people in the later chapters of their lives stand to benefit substantially.

Also, in the cases where people are able to consume the produce of the garden, these home-grown feasts create a more cohesive environment in which relationships can thrive.



## Seasonal Bites

BY LAURA MONCION AND ROSALIND CRUMP

### DANDELION RAREBIT

There are dandelions all over Ottawa, and instead of being a pest they could be food! Try to grab the younger ones, which haven't yet sprouted those tell-tale yellow flowers — you can still eat the older ones, they'll just have a more bitter taste, and the leaves are already quite bitter.



#### INGREDIENTS

- one hefty handful (about 1½ cups) whole dandelion leaves, thoroughly washed, with the white ends cut off
- half a yellow onion, sliced in half-moons
- one medium-sized local, free-range egg
- ½ cup sharp cheddar
- 1 tsp strong mustard
- 2 thick slices of granary bread (we used the Wild Oat's dill and cheese loaf and it was aaaamazing)

#### METHOD

- sauté the onion in olive oil, in a frying pan or shallow saucepan, until caramelized
- add the dandelion and sauté until pleasantly wilted, let cool while you make the rarebit
- to make the rarebit, mix the egg, cheddar, and mustard in a small bowl, with salt and pepper to taste. The mixture should be fairly thick.
- toast the bread (to help it keep its structure under the rarebit). Buttering the bread is not necessary but we did, because we're butter fiends.
- put the slices of bread on a baking sheet, then layer on the sautéed dandelions and onions, and top generously with the rarebit mixture
- broil for 15 minutes at or until the egg is cooked and deliciously browned.

### STRAWBERRY AND CHERRY BREAKFAST CRUMBLE

Berry season is (almost) upon us! I say "breakfast" because this recipe contains fruit and almonds, which completely justify the idea of eating crumble for breakfast. . . This recipe is very approximate, because I made it one morning when I was, shall we say, unhappily disposed. For this reason, it is also ridiculously easy to make.

#### INGREDIENTS

- approx 1 cup organic strawberries, hulled and quartered
- approx 1 cup organic cherries, pitted and halved
- approx ¼ cup demerara or dark brown sugar
- approx ½ cup ground organic almonds

#### METHOD

- mix everything together in a small baking pan or oven-proof glass container
- bake, mixing occasionally, for approximately 20-30 minutes at 350°F, or until the fruit has started to break down and bubble a bit
- eat with a generous splash of fresh cream or with your favourite organic yogurt.

### Canadian Organic Growers, Ottawa St. Lawrence Outaouais Chapter

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Website: [www.cog.ca/ottawa/downtoearth](http://www.cog.ca/ottawa/downtoearth)

Deadline for next *Down to Earth*: **September 1, 2014**. Submit all articles and advertisements to the Editor.

Advertising Policy: Advertisements are accepted in accordance with the current advertising policy, which is revised periodically. Please request the most recent version at the time of your request. Organic growers with produce for sale can be added to the Organic Food Directory.

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