

# Many Hands

Occasional Newsletter of the Port Royal  
Community Garden

June 2004

## Community Garden Calendar:

- 🦅 Queensborough Day Sunday, May 30<sup>th</sup>  
11 am to 4 pm
- 🦅 Urban Farmers' Fall Fair Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup>  
10 am to 4 pm
- 🦅 Community Garden Meeting (October) date TBA

Personification of Summer



## Carrots !



from the *The Sunset Western Garden Book*

The variety to plant depends on the soil's condition: carrots reach smooth perfection only in good-textured soil free of stones and clods.



Plant long market kinds only if you can give them a foot of this ideal, light soil. If you can provide

only a few inches, plant half-long varieties such as 'Nantes' and 'Chantenay' or miniatures 'Amstel', 'Lady Finger' or 'Short 'n Sweet'.

Sow thickly in rows at least 1 ft. apart. Soil should be fine enough for root development and loose enough so crusting can't check sprouting of seeds. If a crust should form, keep soil soft by sprinkling. Too much nitrogen or a lot of manure will make excessive top growth and cause forking of roots. Maintain even soil moisture: alternating wet and dry conditions can split roots. To grow successive plantings, sow seed when previous planting is up and growing; in cold-winter

climates, make last sowing 70 days before anticipated killing frost. When tops are 1-2 in. high, thin plants to 1½ in. apart; thin again if roots begin to crowd. After first thinning, apply narrow band of commercial fertilizer 2 in. out from the row. Begin harvest when carrots reach finger size. In mild winter climates, carrots store well in the ground; dig as needed.



## Port Royal Community Garden Update:

It looks like everyone has got a good start to their gardens this year. We are preparing to seed artichokes and beans to sell at the fall fair in September. Any plants that we do not sell we will contribute to the "Plant A Row - Grow A Row" food bank at the St. Adens Church. As of May 2nd, the manure pile has been completely used up and is no longer parked on Star Crescent; thanks to Ted Karwacki for doing the final clean-up.

I had a question about the **compost**; I'm new to gardening and was wondering if any of our garden buddies knows what we are to be doing to the compost. I know Lisa Turner has lent her hand; it is perhaps something we should all be taking care of. [See next page.] Renée also wanted to let everyone know there are more **water keys** available for the small fee of \$6.00.

Natalie Gauvreau, Community Garden Co-Chair



Sunday, May 30<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm is **QUEENSBOROUGH DAY** at the Community Centre. This annual event is in its 27<sup>th</sup> year and is the last official event during the Hyack Festival. Many local groups and organizations participate in this family focused day. This year the Community Garden will be doing an activity for children. Susanne

Schroeder will be coordinating the table. She has planned the planting of seeds in little plots (free seed give-aways courtesy of New Westminster Parks and Recreation) and the distribution of a question and answer information sheet. She is still in need of volunteers from the Garden Committee to give an hour or two to “man” the table. If you can, please call her and put your name down for one of the time slots. This day is always a great time to come out and celebrate community living in Queensborough. I look forward to seeing you.

Thanks, Renée

# Hey!

You *do* know that blackberries are the theme for this year's **Urban Farmers' Fall Fair**, and it looks like this is going to be a spectacular year for berry set. Well, here's a recipe from the book *Gardener Cook* by the English garden writer Christopher Lloyd.



## Blackberry Fool

Put 2½ cups fresh or frozen blackberries in a saucepan with a scant ½ cup of sugar and the juice of half a lemon and heat, slowly at first. After simmering for 10 minutes, push the pan contents through a strainer. Leave to cool. Whip 1¼ cups heavy or whipping cream till fairly thick; then gently fold in the fruit juice and pulp. Pour into a bowl and chill. Serve with shortbread.

If the berries yield a great deal more juice than pulp, you are in danger of finishing with soup rather than reasonably stiff fool. You may not need to add all the juice to the whipped cream.

## Compost management

For a backyard composter to work properly, organic materials have to be varied—from green, succulent materials, such as vegetable peelings and grass clippings, to tougher, more resilient plant parts, such as straw and twigs. These materials need to be mixed together and moistened regularly; otherwise, the composting process will slow to a complete stop. When it does work, it takes very little time to produce dark, crumbly, microbe-rich, soil-building compost.

Maintenance of a compost pile generally entails the following:

- ✿ ensuring overly large components—materials either too woody or too bulky to break down quickly are removed
- ✿ removing weeds with viable reproductive parts
- ✿ ensuring that coarse and fine materials are layered adequately to allow for good aeration
- ✿ thoroughly mixing and watering the pile weekly

---

## Great resources for the vegetable gardener:

*The Complete Guide to Vegetables for Amateurs and Experts*, Judy Newton, 1991. Whitecap Books, Vancouver. Good local advice, from a local gardening expert.

*The Organic Gardener*, Bob Flowerdew, 1993. Hamlyn, Toronto. Although written for the British market, the author's ideas and advice are both excellent for southwestern BC.

*The Random House Book of Salad Plants*, Roger Phillips and Martyn Rix, 1998. Random House, New York. Beautiful pictures, history and growing tips for a huge range of salad plants.

*The Sunset Western Garden Book*, latest edition. Sunset Publishing Corporation, Menlo Park, California. Includes information on ornamentals as well as edibles. Written for the western US, but extremely useful, nevertheless.

*The Vegetable Expert*, Dr. D.G. Hessayon, latest edition.

PBI Publications, England. A no-nonsense approach to gardening with lots of facts and sensible advice. Want only one book? Choose this one.

