

# THE SEEDLING

The Newsletter of Burnaby and Region Allotment Garden Association  
September, 2015

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### IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Work Parties:** Sept 5<sup>th</sup>  
Any time between 9-4 Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Nov 7<sup>th</sup>

**Work Shops:**  
TBA Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Nov 7<sup>th</sup>

*Starting at 1; Come and share!*

#### Food Bank Pick-ups

*Every Monday before 10 am*

#### Deadline for Completing Community Service Hours

Nov 14<sup>th</sup>



### 2015 ANNUAL PICNIC

On the morning of August 15<sup>th</sup>, the skies were grey and the forecast somewhat ominous, but by noon the clouds started to lift and the preparations for the Annual BARAGA picnic got underway. With an amazing team of site organizers, contest organizers, food organizers, the party was ready to start by 4:00. The Best in Garden contest had some pretty amazing entrants, although fewer than usual – next year we'd like to see more!

The food table was overflowing with an assortment of delicious dishes and deserts from our gardeners. Special thanks go to Walter, Renzo and team for the sausages and pasta!



*Walter and Friends at the Picnic.*

**THE BEST IN GARDEN CONTEST**

The winners for 2015:

**Best Vegetable** #1 plot 27, Marty

#2 Plot 87, Mario

**Best Flowers** #1 plot 233, Chris

#2 Plot 265, Byron

**Best Canning/Baking** #1 plot 265, Ann

#2 Plot 59, Kathleen

**Best Fruit** – #1 plot 333, Larry

**Best Presentation** – #1 plot 103, Vaughn/Don

#2 Plot 270, Sophia

**Most Unusual** – #1 Plot 86, Paul

#2 Plot 197, Rose

**THE BEST PLOTS FOR 2015**

**#1 Best Plot** #267 Esther won Best Plot for 2015 and as a new gardener, she was delighted.



*Esther and her #1 star...go check out her plot for inspiration!*

**#2 Best Plot** #346

This was the best maintained and planted by Isabel Esteves.

**#3 Best Plot** #42

This was the neatest and most weed-free by Sandra Duplessis

**OTHER NOTABLES**

Thanks to Ramiro and Doug for judging the best plots. They did a remarkable job and took lots of notes. Here are some notables from other plots which we will call the **Best, Most, and Highest!**

**Plot # 123 and 197** for the **most** planted vegetables, fruit and use of space

**Plot # 356** for the **nicest** lay-out and visual

**Plot # 308** for the **most improved** (Note: these are new members!)

**Plot # 319** for the **highest** bean plants

**Plot # 254** for the **best** grapevines

**Plot # 164** for the **best** grapevines and fruit trees.

**Plot #71** for the **nicest** flowers



*Best Vegetable!*



*Best Looking Gardener!*

## WATER CONSERVATION AT BARAGA

### BARAGA INPUT

We put up a notice on the office white board to try and get ideas from our gardeners on how to conserve water at BARAGA. Here were some of your ideas:

***Leave buckets out to collect rainwater***

***Water at the base of vegies***

***Stop watering so much!***

***Wash your vegetables in a bucket and then use the bucket to water plants***

***Water ONCE per week***

***Post Water Meter records on board regularly***

***Drink Beer!***

These are all excellent ideas and hopefully some people have thought a little more carefully about our water situation, considering the drought conditions we had for most of the summer.

### JUST SO YOU KNOW

- Water consumption from April 8, 2015 until July 6, 2015 was 5,505 cubic meters and the cost was \$8200.25.
- We have budgeted close to \$15,000 for water and last year we spent close to \$17,000.
- The general rule of thumb for watering vegetables is about an inch or two of water each week with deep, infrequent watering as opposed to the more frequent shallow watering.

## GARBAGE AT BARAGA

Metro Vancouver brought in by-laws in January, 2015 to ban all green waste from their garbage bins. This includes BARAGA garbage bins. You **CANNOT** throw your weeds, diseased plants or any other green material from your garden into the garbage bins. Please pass the word on to others so that we can help our fellow gardeners with composting, waste management and sustainable gardening.



In the meantime, the board is working on setting up a composting area, but there will be limited access to this area, so we encourage all gardener's to start composting on their own plots. If you must throw out your green waste, PLEASE bag it, take it home with you and dispose of it yourself.

## FOOD BANK DONATIONS

*Monica Jones*

As you can see from the white Food bank box, BARAGA gardeners have been sharing their bounty. Over the month of August, the box was brimming with beans, tomatoes and cucumbers that added variety to the usual kale, Swiss Chard and (gigantic!) zucchinis.

I met up with Ian and Martel who were doing our pick up for the first time. We talked as they transferred the food into the big truck. They told me that some of our vegetables go to DECK

(Downtown Eastside Community Kitchens.)  
 “They make delicious soups with all these vegetables,” Ian said.



**Food Bank Pick-up**

As we move into autumn, let’s keep filling up the box for the Food bank:

- Drop off your donation in the white box by the second shed next to the BARAGA office anytime before 10 am on Monday morning.
- Pick-up will be between 10-12 on Mondays.
- We want to provide fresh, healthy, delicious, nutritious, produce.
- Please clean (relatively) vegetables – dirt impacts the cleaning of the refrigerator truck.
- Please top off any unedible part of the produce.
- Place produce in bags to help out the Food Bank folks.

## THANK YOU!

*Editor’s note: Please see the next page on the Quest program as another option we may be interested in for donations.*

## COMPOSTING ON YOUR PLOT

It’s easier than you think. Here are some ideas for fall clean-up:

- Dig a big, deep hole and throw all your waste into the hole. The paths in your plot

are a good place to do this, as you get some pretty nice soil out of it.

- The jury is still out on diseased plants. They say you need hot compost or a deep hole – but, it still doesn’t mean that you can throw your diseased plants in the garbage. (*Editor’s note: We’ve been composting ALL of our waste for years and have the same problems with clubroot and horsetail that all of our other neighbours have.*)
- Invest in a composter or build one yourself.
- At the end of the season, pile up your dead plants in piles – by the spring, they will be little, dried-up, beautiful piles of compost.

## SOME AMAZING BURNABY RESOURCES

*Ann Talbot*

Burnaby has an amazing assortment of resources, not only for those who are garden-minded, but those who are also interested in advocating food security or protecting our agricultural land base. Here are two that do some excellent work in Burnaby.

### BURNABY FOOD FIRST

<http://burnabyfoodfirst.blogspot.ca/>

If you go to the BFF’s website, you will immediately be impressed by the extent of the work they do. BARAGA is now being represented on their steering committee. They are a great resource for getting ideas for fund-raising, developing connections with other Burnaby organizations and providing more resources for all our gardeners. They hold workshops such as pickling, canning, container gardening, which are all free. What is most important, is that they advocate for food security in Burnaby and that is what BARAGA is all about.

## QUEST FOOD EXCHANGE

<http://www.questoutreach.org/>

*“ Quest Food Exchange: Food Programs to Reduce Hunger with Dignity*

*Quest is British Columbia’s largest not-for-profit food exchange program. We offer access to affordable and healthy food choices for those facing barriers to this basic necessity. In partnering with food suppliers, social service agencies, and community stakeholders, we have fine-tuned our social enterprise model to become a hub of food redistribution in the Lower Mainland. Our programs are seen as essential to marginalized individuals as they transition themselves towards self-sufficiency.”*

This organization is very interested in working with us for donations. Although we already donate to the Food Bank on Mondays, perhaps we have enough to share for a Thursday pick-up also? Quest runs a “Not-for-Profit Grocery Market” in Burnaby, so this is another relationship that could help BARAGA become a more community-minded. Stay tuned; we may run a trial pick-up in the next few weeks.

## RECIPES FOR YOUR VEGETABLES

### LEMON BEET PICKLES

*Editor’s note: The following recipe is from the #1 place for Canning and Baking. I must say that there were only 2 entries, so both of them won...next year, we must have more entries in all categories!*

This recipe is from *Jean Paré’s Company’s Coming Series – Preserves (2002)*. It is a great ‘relish’ and substitute for your common cranberry relish.

4 cups skinned and diced beets

4 cups sugar

1 cup slivered almonds

1 tbsp. ground ginger

2 medium lemons, with peel, quartered and thinly sliced

1 cup lemon juice

1. Cook beets until tender and add sugar, almonds and ginger. Boil, stirring frequently for about 30 minutes.
2. Add lemons and lemon juice and simmer for another 30 minutes, stirring frequently.
3. Should make 5 half pints or more. Prepare your jars, lids, etc. and process in boiling bath for about 5 minutes.

### BRINED PICKLES

*From “Rooted Nutrition”, a local company run by Andrea Potter, a passionate nutritionist.*

*“ Did you know that before canning with vinegar, pickles were traditionally made using only salt water brine? The slow fermentation process changes the flavours and improves the nutrition of the pickles! And because they are not heated, they are naturally probiotic and rich in enzymes that help digestion.*

#### Instructions:

1. Prepare a brine using the ratio of two tablespoons of salt to one quart of water. If it is over 85 degrees in your kitchen, use one extra tablespoon of salt. Stir well and set aside.
2. Chop vegetables (cucumbers, squash, carrots, green tomatoes, radishes, asparagus, and just about any other vegetable like) into sticks or bite-sized pieces.

3. Gather flavorings – garlic, onions, fresh
4. herbs, or your favorite pickling spices.
5. Add garlic, herbs, and spices to the bottom of your clean quart, half-gallon, or gallon jar.
6. Add one of the following to keep your vegetables crisp: grape, horseradish, oak, black tea (yes the kind you drink), or mesquite leaves.
7. Place chopped vegetables atop flavorings, leaving at least 2 inches of headspace from the rim of the jar. Pour the brine over the vegetables so they are covered by at least one inch. Two to four inches is even better, but hard to achieve in quart jars.
8. Weigh down your vegetables so they stay below the brine while fermenting. You can use small plates that will fit into the jar opening, inverted plastic jar lids, a large cabbage leaf, root vegetable slices.
9. Cap the jar tightly and allow to sit at 65-85 degrees for around 10 days, or more, depending on your preference. The longer they ferment at room temperature, the sourer they become.
10. During the earliest stages of fermentation carbon dioxide is released. Check your jars once or twice a day to see if the lids are building up pressure. If you cannot press down on the canning lid as you normally would, very quickly and carefully “burp” your jar by slightly unscrewing the lid, allowing a bit of gas to escape, and screwing it back on quickly.
11. Once completed, move to cold storage – a root cellar, a basement, a cool garage, anywhere below 65 degrees, or a refrigerator.



## BEES AT BARAGA

*Eric Crosby*

The BARAGA Apiary (group of honey bee colonies) has been managed organically now for 3 years. The first year was a major struggle and the colonies were fed a lot of sugar syrup to stimulate them and keep them from collapsing. However, for the last 2 years this has not been necessary. The primary management technique used to maintain an organic apiary is spring and summer splitting of the colonies. Every time a colony has to “requeen” it goes through a period where all of the worker bees hatch (21 days), as well as drones (24 days). This is called a brood break and it will usually be 7-14 days after the bee hatches that the first new eggs will be laid. There is a varroa mite that infests honey bee colonies, which reproduces in the capped brood (pupae stage). During a brood break, the Varroa mite cannot reproduce and thereby is kept below a critical threshold. Usually, late August or September is when many honey bee colonies succumb to overpopulation of mites. To avoid this the second brood break is initiated sometime in July. Most beekeepers use miticides (pesticides) to control the population of varroa mites, however the mites are able to overcome most miticides over time, and most miticides also have a negative impact on the bees. At BARAGA we have been able to maintain the number of colonies by dividing them. We take some losses in the winter, and bounce back in the spring and summer. This

year, the limited amount of rain seems to have decreased the amount of stored honey supplies, so we did not take off as much. I hope everyone had a chance to enjoy some of the fruits of the honey bees' labor, which is not just in the form of honey, but also in the form of our beautifully pollinated fruits and vegetables.

*Editor's Note: Thanks very much to Eric Crosby and Laura Zazzara for their work with the bees. We should be very proud of the fact that we raise bees without any treatment at all.*



## GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Friends and fellow gardeners,

Another successful summer growing season is winding down for some while many amongst us are already done planting for a winter harvest and getting ready for fall planting of garlic and other promises for the next growing season.

Gardeners come in all shapes and sizes. Some are highly experience, and some are novices with their heart in the right place. Some appear to have a natural gift to do just the right thing and seem to be able to get the best response from their plants with what seems to be the least amount of effort. Others appear to struggle with getting the zucchini plants to provide a decent harvest. Most of us at BARAGA fall somewhere between the former and the latter.

It has been said by many an observant farmers "You reap what you sow".

Normally these words have a negative sound to them, but looking at some of the produce on display at the annual picnic contest, one was left to wonder what are the secrets of such an amazing harvest.

This growing year has seen some exceptional results from BARAGA members which were displayed at the annual picnic last month. Some of the entries at the best in class competition were outstanding specimens demonstrative of the high caliber of our garden members.

Friends, the BARAGA board members also work hard and try to work towards harvesting a joyful and sustainable community which can be appreciated and enjoyed by all members. This is not an easy task by any measure. Yet my hope is that eventually, good intentions and collective wisdom will lead to good results. This has been the guiding principal of the board as long as I have been fortunate enough to be a part of it. In the coming months and years it is my sincere hope that BARAGA will continue to be a shining example of a sustainable urban agricultural garden community. In order to do so we all need to pull together and contribute towards keeping our gardens clean and running efficiently. Please try and compost on your own plots until such time when the community composting project is completed.

The Structures committee has come up with a draft proposal for guidelines for garden structures, which need to be approved by the city before they are presented to BARAGA membership to vote on at the AGM. Till then please be patient and follow the current guidelines.

Happy gardening,  
Abdul Majid

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### *Editor's Note:*

*We are happy to announce the addition of **Grace Shigenobu** as our new Membership Secretary. Thanks for stepping up to the plate Grace!*

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*Walter and friend at the picnic.*

*This newsletter was edited by Ann Talbot. I hope you enjoy this issue. Please feel free to e-mail me at [seedling@baraga.ca](mailto:seedling@baraga.ca)*