

# LOG

**December 2013**

Welcome to the LOG Newsletter for December 2013.

## **Annual Seed Order**

Every Year we place a group seed order with Chase Organics. Members of Garden Organic will have received a catalogue, but we will have some available at the December Group Night.

Choose your order over Christmas and bring it to the January Meeting. Your seeds will be ordered and available at the February Meeting.

**We aim to give you a saving of at least 25% on catalogue price  
(but may depend on total order size)**

## **Organic Pioneers Recognised**

The pioneers who have significantly contributed to organic food and farming over the last 40 years were honoured at a special event held during the Soil Association's Annual Conference.

The representative group of 15 organic growers and farmers were awarded a plaque to acknowledge their dedication to both The Soil Association and the wider organic movement at a ceremony which also commemorated the 40th Anniversary of Soil Association Certification.

Among those recognised were vegetable growers John and Ruth Daltry who were among the first of the UK's farmers and growers to be awarded the Soil Association Symbol in 1974, and are still as committed as ever to making fresh organic produce and wine available to the people of Leicestershire.

As they are members of our Group, we would also like to add our sincere congratulations and Best Wishes.

# **WINTER PROGRAMME**

## **2014 Dates**

### **Friday January 10th**

“75 years at Rectory Farm” - an historic film of farming on the edge of Eyebrook Reservoir - a window into the past.

Phil Johnson will be telling us of a successful farm and habitat creation for a variety of wildlife.

Wild bird seed from the farm will be for sale

### **Friday February 14th**

Virtuous Bread

A discussion on all things relating to bread making

### **Friday March 14th**

“Love Your Bugs”

A talk by Sally Cunningham from Garden Organic

### **Friday April 11th**

**Tba**

## **Committee Changes**

Two of our long standing committee members, Arthur Needham, and Tony Clarke decided to stand down from the committee as from the 2013 AGM.

The committee would like to thank them for their help and dedication over many years. It does of course mean that there are currently vacancies on the committee. If anyone is interested, please let one of us know.

# Changes to Ryton Organic Gardens

An extract from a letter to Garden Organic members sent in October 2013.

“Over the Winter, changes will be made to Ryton Organic Gardens to better reflect the current and future demand for knowledge and learning about organic gardening and growing, particularly from new gardeners and new communities. This will mean a focus on smaller demonstration gardens (with improved displays and hands-on activities), which our expert gardeners and education staff can use to teach and allow for practical involvement.

We are going to transform our flagship buildings; the area currently occupied by the Vegetable Kingdom will be reinterpreted as an education and resource centre, where we can not only cater for group visits, but also hold live demonstration sessions and which will enable us to ‘stream’ these sessions live on the internet and to record them for later downloading; there will be a dedicated members’ only space, with a library area, and we expect to have provision for catering on an organic basis, with organic produce available from the gardens.

Whilst this work is being undertaken there may be some disruption on the site, and the catering provision may be rudimentary, although there will always be hot drinks available.

From November 2nd, the gardens will open only from Monday to Saturday for members and visitors, as the cost of Sunday opening is disproportionate to the number of visitors. The gardens will also be closed between December 24th and January 1st inclusive.”

As a member of Council, and a Trustee of Garden Organic, I have been involved in the talks that have brought about the changes, partly due to the exit of Webbs. However, I have seen plans for the reorganisation of the gardens and am very enthusiastic about how the site will look from Spring and the new emphasis that it will have.

Bob Haskins.

An extract from the Secretary's report to the AGM.

I often start the annual report with a reflection on what is happening nationally in the organic world. Some things seem to be going well, others not so, and there are changes happening. There is a continuing decline in membership of organisations but there is some excellent work being done despite this. I'm talking about projects like the "Food for Life Partnership" and the "School Food Plan". The former is a network of schools and communities across England who are committed to transforming food culture. The aim is to reach out through schools to give communities access to seasonal, local and organic food, and also the skills they need to cook and grow fresh food. The partnership includes the Soil Association, Garden Organic, Focus on Food Campaign, the Health Education Trust, and the Royal Society for Public Health. The other project is the "School Food Plan". In brief, this is a project to support head teachers to improve food in their schools. Both projects provide much information about their work on their websites. Looking at the organisations to which we affiliate, the Soil Association has launched "Organic September - Small Changes, Big Difference". The idea is to persuade the public to make at least one small change in order to make an overall big difference to sustainable food, animal welfare and the environment. Garden Organic is going through a period of change. They have just appointed a new Chief Executive, James Campbell, who comes from the Earthwatch Institute. Myles Bremner, the current Chief Executive has just taken on the leadership of the "School Food Plan". In another change, Webbs, who took over the commercial aspects at Ryton, have decided to activate their option to leave the site in early 2014, and options for the future are currently being explored.

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## Group Web Site

We have now produced a simple web site at:

[www.leicsorganicgroup.org.uk](http://www.leicsorganicgroup.org.uk)

This will contain latest information about the programme and our newsletters. Please take a look and if you have any suggestions then contact us below or email [info@leicsorganicgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@leicsorganicgroup.org.uk)

Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/leicsorganicgroup](http://www.facebook.com/leicsorganicgroup)

The next Newsletter will be produced in April 2014. Articles can be sent to [info@leicsorganicgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@leicsorganicgroup.org.uk)

**Leicestershire Organic Group is a joint local group of  
The Soil Association and Henry Doubleday Research Association  
(Garden Organic)**

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