

LOG

December 2014

Welcome to the LOG Newsletter for December 2014.

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 may 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)**

Catalogues may be obtained from Chase Organics by telephoning
01932 253666

World Soil Day, 5th December 2014

Soils have been neglected for too long. We fail to connect soil with our food, water, climate, biodiversity and life. We must invert this tendency and take up some preserving and restoring actions. The World Soil Day campaign aims to connect people with soils and raise awareness on their critical importance in our lives.

Soil is the basis for food, feed, fuel and fibre production and for services to ecosystems and human well-being. It is the reservoir for at least a quarter of global biodiversity, and therefore requires the same attention as above-ground biodiversity. Soils play a key role in the supply of clean water and resilience to floods and droughts. The largest store of terrestrial carbon is in the soil so that its preservation may contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The maintenance or enhancement of global soil resources is essential if humanity's need for food, water, and energy security is to be met.

More Information: <http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/world-soil-day/en/>

WINTER PROGRAMME

2014 Dates

Friday January 9th

“Voices of Transition”

A DVD which is an exploration of socio-ecological change and presents a new vision of how our food system could be.

Friday February 13th

“A potted history of the Red Hill Allotments”

1909 - 2014

Iris O'Toole

Friday March 13th

“Farming Practices in Kenya and Mongolia”

Dr Kate Moore

Friday April 10th

“Growing a Healthier County with Leicestershire Master Gardeners”

Alison McGrath



Leicestershire Master Gardeners on a fruit training day at Ryton Gardens.

November Meeting The Leicestershire Heritage Apple Project

Nigel and Alison Deacon spoke about Leicestershire Heritage Apples. The talk included an overview of what makes a heritage apple and the ways in which most of the missing Leicestershire apples were located was described in some detail. The evening finished with an apple tasting; Nigel and Alison had brought samples of about 40 varieties of apple, and fourteen of these were sampled by the audience.

The apples tasted were: Allen's Everlasting, Ard Cairn Russet, Burford Redflesh, Croft Late Seedling, D'Arcy Spice, Durrant's Apple, Grenadine, Hidden Rose, May Queen, MM106, Packington, Pitmaston Pineapple and Wickson. The three favourites for the evening seemed to be Hidden Rose (its crimson flesh and good flavour being really striking), Durrant's apple (with its extraordinary flavour and sweetness) and Packington (a very pleasant, low-acid Leicestershire apple with a soft texture).

The talk had started with a description of the origins of the apple in the wild fruit forests of Kazakhstan and some interesting details of the apple species and how they can, and more importantly, cannot, be propagated.

The organisation has a website at:
<http://www.suttonelms.org.uk/APPLE1.HTML>

and it is possible to buy heritage apple trees at
http://www.gb-online.co.uk/prestashop/category.php?id_category=140

Leicestershire Organic Group Annual report 2014 (extract)

The last few years have been difficult times for charities in general, and this has certainly been the case in the organic sector. However, the two charities to which we affiliate are weathering the "austerity years" and even producing good news. Garden Organic are settling down well with their new Chief Executive and have made changes to accommodate the current financial climate in terms of concentrating on specific areas of their expertise. The partnership in running the restaurant and shop with Webbs Garden Centres came to an end during the winter and the emphasis is now on an education centre rather than a visitor attraction. The gardens have been reorganised to save cost, though not as restrictively as originally anticipated and The Vegetable Kingdom has been refurbished with much more adaptable displays, and renamed The Organic Way. There are also some products from Chase Organics for sale in the reception area and a cafe is in operation, run by Fresh Rootz, a veganic catering company that has set up its HQ at Ryton. Well worth a visit. The Soil Association have also reported good news recently. Their latest Organic Market Report reveals that sales of organic products in the UK grew by 2.8% in 2013, a return to growth after four years of contraction. Growth within independent retailers was higher than this indicating that more people are shopping in smaller stores and local organic outlets. Secondly, a report in the British Journal of Nutrition (from a Newcastle University led study) concludes that organically grown crops contain significantly higher levels of nutritionally desirable antioxidants and lower levels of undesirable cadmium and pesticide residues. It is nice to have some of the benefits that we have always known published in an authoritative journal.

Group Web Site

We have now produced a simple web site at:
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

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/leicsorganicgroup

The next Newsletter will be produced in April 2015. Articles can be sent to info@leicsorganicgroup.org.uk

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

For further details contact group secretary, Bob Haskins, 01509 842449, or publicity officer, Leon Marvell, 0116 269 4978.