

LOG

December 2015

Welcome to the LOG Newsletter for December 2015.

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

The Soil Edition

Our intended speaker for the November meeting was unable to attend, so we had to arrange an alternative. 2015 is the International Year of Soil and there has been a certain amount of publicity, particularly from The Soil Association. We decided to use this as a theme for the meeting. Robin was able to source a number of video clips, and we used these, plus associated discussions during them and afterwards, to re-explore the roots of our Group from its founding as part of The Soil Association.

The video clips can be found in Youtube at the following addresses:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1qREajbJiE>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApMqeK6qwYY>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=invUp0SX49g>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZNanlXMXk4>

The Soil Association has also published a short video, made by Aardman Animations at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fd871cZzG14>

Garden Organic has produced a useful soil information guide which can be found at:

<https://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/soil-information-pack>

WINTER PROGRAMME

2016 Dates

Friday January 8th

“A Home Produced Event”

The suggested topic is Propagation

Friday February 12th

“Leicestershire Master Composters”

Rod Weston

Friday March 13th

To be arranged

Friday April 10th

To be arranged

It is hoped to rearrange the intended talk from November 2015 to one of the dates above.

Please see the website for updates.



Nice to have something in our garden that flowers in the Winter.

Mahonia
Winter Sun.

Living Soils A Call to Action

The Soil Association has produced this document, and the full contents can be found on their website.

Soil is essential for life on earth. It is the earth's living skin we all rely on, but take for granted. One quarter of all known species live within soil. Just one teaspoon can hold more organisms than there are people on the planet. Soils hold more carbon than our atmosphere and vegetation combined. As lady Eve Balfour, founder of The Soil Association said: 'The health of soil, plant, animal and man is one and indivisible'.

Healthy soils enable us to produce food and meet our basic needs.
Soils control water flow and contain pollution.
Soil regulates climate change due to its ability to hold carbon.

Soil is a combination of minerals, organic matter, air, water and living organisms. It is this combination of materials that provides the essential components and services to sustain life.

The Soil Crisis.

Across the world, soils are being damaged by human activity and it has been estimated that around one third of the world's arable land has been lost since 1960, and approximately 25% of the world's soils are severely degraded.

In order to save our soils, we need to combat degradation on all levels, and improve soil processes and nutrient sourcing, management of water in soils and protection of soil biodiversity. Organic farming provides the means to do this..

What can we all do?

Look after the soil in our gardens and community spaces. Grow our own food, recycling as much of our own nutrients and water as we can.
Support soil-friendly organic farming through shopping choice.
Support campaigning work to get the Government to take soil seriously.
Raise awareness.

Leicestershire Organic Group Annual report 2015 (extract)

As has been the case for a number of years now, September has been designated "Organic September" by the Soil Association. One wonders what is the impact of this outside the world of those that know and understand the benefits already. The Soil Association website points to an article in *Country Living* that states: According to The Soil Association, by opting for organic fruit, vegetables and cereal crops, we will experience noticeable nutritional benefits. Moreover, organic farms are havens for wildlife, with more species of birds, bees, butterflies and wildflowers than non-organic farms. By visiting local farm shops and organic supermarkets, and by cooking organic recipes for our friends and families, we could therefore be improving not only our own wellbeing but that of our environment. Good advice indeed. There have also been articles in *The Mirror* on organic beauty products and *The Telegraph* about saving our soil. I have an earlier article by George Monbiot in *The Guardian* which is entitled "We're treating soil like dirt. It's a fatal mistake as our lives depend on it", again about the dangers of soil destruction. We also showed the video "Voices of Transition" at our January 2015 meeting which showed the dangers of chemical fertilisers and also how different groups of people are showing alternatives to the modern way of thinking. The Soil Association will be 70 years old next year and has been putting this message across since 1946, so let's hope that it's impact becomes apparent in the very near future.

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 2016. 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.