

Dig This!

Winter 2018

COMING UP

How to Start a Community Garden Workshop

February 3, 12:30 - 3:30 pm, Rm 1A Whitby Library

AGM ~ March 29, with Key note speaker Henk Mulder from Link Greenhouses in Bowmanville.



Cultivating the Urban Agriculture Policy Conversation

On November 2, DIG, Durham Food Policy Council (DFPC), and Durham Region Planning and Economic Development, with the support of Feed the Need Durham, hosted a half-day workshop, Cultivating the Conversation: A Workshop on Urban Agriculture Policy, for municipal staff from across Durham. The workshop followed up on DIG and DFPC research that scanned urban agriculture-related policies across Durham. Participants heard about some approaches to urban agriculture policy in the City of Hamilton and the findings from the Durham scan. Carolyn Puterbough from OMAFRA then facilitated discussion of successes, challenges, and strategies for addressing policy gaps in Durham.

Much of the participants' feedback regarded the need for better and more inclusive communication, education, coordination, and collaboration around urban agriculture and the policies that structure it. DIG, DFPC and partners will continue to carry out research and communication activities to support urban agriculture policy. The urban agriculture policy scan report, Digging for a Just and Sustainable Food System, can be found at –

www.durahmdigs.ca/resources



and a summary report of the workshop is available at –

www.durhamfoodpolicycouncil.com/blank-1

Snaps of Autumn events

Black Duck Wild Rice excursion ▶

Ajax Table Talk with Correne Omland ~ Preserving the Harvest ▼



Top - Welcome and Instructions
Bottom - Paddling in the rice beds
Right - Rolling the rice with moccasin covered feet to loosen chaff

GardenTip

What is a Seedy Saturday?

Seedy Saturdays are a remarkable phenomenon. They are not one event, but a series of separate events, which have sprung up everywhere, each uniquely organized under the same general themes of encouraging use of open-pollinated and heritage seeds, enabling a local seed exchange, and educating the public about seed saving and environmentally responsible gardening practices. They usually occur on a Saturday, hence the name, but may also take place on other days. They are often organized by local horticultural societies.

Seedy Saturdays are fun events where you can swap and exchange seeds, get exciting varieties that other seed savers are sharing (as well as the stories that come with them); sometimes attend workshops and talks, meet vendors and/or buy from seed companies.

For a partial list of upcoming Seedy Saturdays and other events, check out this site:

seeds.ca/events

GardenTip

Seed suppliers and seed catalogues



Here is a partial list of Canadian seed suppliers. Most will mail you a seed catalogue if you apply for one online. Catalogues are wonderful sources for growing instructions and gardening tips.

Some of these suppliers are large like Veseys and West Coast Seeds. Some are smaller like Cubits and Greta's Organic Seeds, and may only have online catalogues. Smaller does not mean less quality. For instance Cubits seeds are excellent and last for a number of years.

Cubits

www.cubitsseedco.com

Greta's Organic Gardens

www.seeds-organic.com

Hawthorn Farm

www.hawthornfarm.ca

Hope Seeds

www.hopeseed.com

Ontario Seeds Company

www.oscseeds.com

Seeds of diversity

www.seeds.ca

The Cottage Gardener

cottagegardener.com

Urban Harvest

www.uharvest.ca

Veseys Seeds

www.veseys.com

West Coast Seeds

www.westcoastseeds.com

William Dam Seeds

www.damseeds.ca/productcart/pc/home.asp

GardenTip

Starting Seeds Indoors

It isn't difficult; it's keeping them alive that can be challenging. Avoiding these **common mistakes** will greatly increase your odds for success.

■ Not enough light

Seedlings need a lot of light. Even a South facing window usually won't do. Get some grow lights and keep the lights as close to the seedlings as possible without touching (2 to 3 inches). After your seedlings appear, keep the lights on for 12 to 16 hours a day.

■ Too much or too little water

Cover your container with plastic, until the seeds germinate. Water from the bottom. By letting the plants soak up water through holes in their pots, there is less chance of over watering

■ Starting too soon

Lots of plants don't like the cold and exposing them to chilly air and soil will just stress them out making them more susceptible to pests and

disease. Most plants are ready to go outside four to six weeks after you start the seeds.

■ Planting too deep

Planting depth information is usually on the seed packet. If there isn't any information, the rule of thumb is to plant seeds twice or three times as deep as they are wide. If you're not sure, err on the shallow side.

For seeds that need light to germinate, you'll want to make sure that they are in contact with your seed starting medium, but not covered.

■ Tough love

Expose your baby plants to the outside elements gradually.

This means that you put your seedlings outside for more time every day over the course of 6 to ten days, depending on your patience, the temperatures and the fragility of your seedlings.

■ Getting seduced

Don't buy more seeds than you can start, much less nurture into adulthood. Starting modestly is the way to go.

■ Too cool

For seeds to germinate, most must be kept warm 65 to 75°F.

■ Labeling issues

Get popsicle sticks and write the name of the seeds and the day you planted them in permanent ink. Stick it into the soil next to the seeds you've planted or label by row.

www.thespruce.com/growing-seeds-indoors-common-mistakes-847800

DigThis!

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