



Spring 2009

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Spring has arrived but is it the beginning? We started this growing season last fall. It involved the sorting and division of many of the perennials that we grow. We also potted up shrubs and perennials to larger pots. Lastly our perennials were put to sleep in a greenhouse that was kept just below freezing... the beginning yes but only just!

Our seeding began in December. It is a leisurely pace at that time of the year. As the winter unfolds we keep propagating and transplanting opening up more and more greenhouses until Spring! When you pick up those plants from one of our outlets

please realize that it got its start many months before and only now, in spring gets to start the balance of its journey.

"I shop here all the time because I just love knowing that I get the volume discount on all my purchases"

I was struck watching an ad on the tv about just how good a deal we are

making our plants for our customers. The ad was for a major banks credit card that had a "reward" system that gave 2% back on some purchases. At least that card gave you a concrete amount of saving with each purchase. Some others seem to require an advanced degree in cryptology in order to decipher exactly what benefit you get. Well for many years at our central location in Odessa we have been offering our customer's the best reward plan that I have seen. If you purchase \$50.00 you get 10% off your purchases. If you purchase \$200 you get 20% off your purchases.

The best part of this deal is that we keep track of your purchases on our computer cash system. What does that mean to you? Every purchase that you make counts toward your volume discount and if your current purchase takes you over \$50.00 or \$200.00 in season long purchases we give you a rebate on your past purchases. This discount is available at our greenhouse in Odessa.



Sale items are excluded from further discounts (but do count to get you closer to the discount thresholds!).

"By the time one is eighty, it is said, there is no longer a tug of war in the garden with the May flowers hauling like mad against the claims of the other months. All is at last in balance and all is serene. The gardener is usually dead, of course."
~Henry Mitchell

We are often asked the question "how often should this plant be watered". The answer is always the same...when it needs it! What that means is that you must have a schedule of checking your plants to see if they need water but not a schedule of applying water. The difference is that you are exercising judgment about the needs and state of the plant. The result? The roots will thrive and the plant will then be able to take full advantage of the water you apply.

"You can observe a lot by just watchin" -Yogi Berra

Fire Manure; It is an ancient tradition all over the world to add charred biomass to the soil.

It has been shown to increase the nutrient holding capacity and help the microorganisms that work with your plant, making it strong.

We have been experimenting with the making of Biochar with our biomass heating system. It is still early days yet but we



are hopeful that the many benefits of Biochar can be systematically proven and that we will successfully be able to produce this valuable soil amendment as a by-product of heating our greenhouses.

Alex English from Burt's Greenhouses made a presentation at the inaugural meeting of the Canadian Biochar initiative as well as to the local group Switch Kingston. It is an exciting area with much promise not least of which is the potential to sequester carbon in the soil.

"Unemployment is capitalism's way of getting you to plant a garden."
~Orson Scott Card

Garden Workshops; We had great success (and feedback!) from our series of garden workshops put on by Darlene Cullimore and Anne Maxwell. They are back with a series of 4 workshops this year.

In addition to Anne and Darlene we are very excited to have Cam Mather from Tamworth coming to do a workshop on Vegetable growing. You may know Cam from the presentations he has given about renewable energy in the Kingston area and beyond. He and his wife Michelle are living off the grid near Tamworth Ontario. What you may not have known is that Cam as a avid eater who also has made a passion of vegetable gardening. Cam has produced a gardening video on dvd that has recently sold over 300 copies into the United States.

What all these folks share is a passion and energy about gardening that is infectious. Please don't miss out. You will be rewarded with an entertaining, unique and educational look at gardening.

Darlene and Anne (Sat. at 2:00)

May 9 Container Magic Design Success

May 16 Kitchen Gardening Mix Vegetables, Herbs & Flowers

May 23 The Natural Garden Shrubs with Perennials

May 30 Hot! Summer Gardens Colour in the Sun

Cam Mather

May 17 and May 24(Sun. at 2:00) Cam will show you how to save energy, eat well and do it simply in your own backyard. The 100 yard diet!

"I appreciate the misunderstanding I have had with Nature over my perennial border. I think it is a flower garden; she thinks it is a meadow lacking grass, and tries to correct the error." ~Sara Stein, My Weeds, 1988

This year we decided to consult some vegetable enthusiasts to see if we could improve our selection. Of course when you talk to gardeners there is no shortage of opinions! But hopefully the choices we have made are good ones and thanks to everyone for the help.

We have added; In tomatoes Opalka (6" long by 3", few seeds good paste and saucing tomato), Box Car Willie (10 oz all purpose tomato with good flavour for fresh eating) Black Cherry (great tasting cherry tomato) all of these are open pollinated so you can save your own seeds.

In peppers Trinidad Perfume which is a seasoning pepper. It is a Habanero type with the flavour but little of the heat. If you want to experiment with different pepper flavours but are sensitive to hot peppers these might be worth a try. Tiburon is an Anchos type pepper popular in south western cooking. They are good for stuffing and roasting and often seen used dried.

And we are doing more melons adding watermelons, a true cantaloupe and some muskmelons all of which have been bred for short

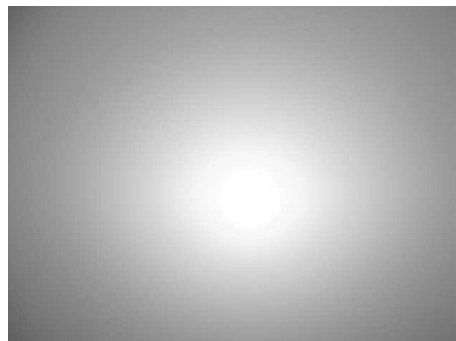
season areas.

"To be interested in the changing seasons is a happier state of mind than to be hopelessly in love with spring." ~George Santayana

We were privileged to meet Ken Allan in the fall. For those who don't know Ken is one of the most ambitious vegetable gardeners in the Kingston area. In the 90s he organized a newsletter to publish the results of informal experiments of his own and other gardeners. They are a wealth of structured information.

Ken's other major claim to fame is that of writing a book on northern sweet potato growing. Sweet potatoes love heat and are normally thought of as a southern crop. They can be grown in northern climates if some basic precautions and careful variety choices are made.

If you want to try some cuttings we should have them available for the 1st of June and if you want to know how to grow them we will have Ken's book as well!



“Science, or para-science, tells us that geraniums bloom better if they are spoken to. But a kind word every now and then is really quite enough. Too much attention, like too much feeding, and weeding and hoeing, inhibits and embarrasses them.” ~Victoria Glendinning



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Napanee



Mothers Day Special
Free

10" Hanging Basket with any \$30.00 plant purchase!.....May 7 to 10

Limit 1 per customer