

fairfield allotments

newsletter 20 Autumn 2009

Order your seed for next year now and contribute to the allotment funds at the same time

The Seed scheme will continue again for the 2009/10 season. Those of you who were on the plots over the last four years will remember that as the Association is member of the National Association of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners, this is one of the benefits – cheap seeds from Kings. Plus we get very necessary insurance cover as well.

If you look at the prices in the catalogue you'll see discounts of up to 40% and some things are even cheaper. The other advantage is because we're ordering in bulk, you'll have no postage and packing to pay – just a standard fee to facilitate the Association's individual packing costs and distribution. There are organic seeds in there too, so you need look no further to maintain your green credentials.

If you want to order seed through the scheme, fill out the order form at the back of the booklet as instructed and return it along with your payment to either John Lambert or John Weedy (addresses below). Add £2.00 administration fee (£1 for the association and £1.00 for Kings to pack each members order separately which will help speed distribution of the order when it arrives), and pay by either cash or cheque at the time of ordering.

If you're paying by cheque make it payable to Fairfield Allotment Holders Association.

Please place all orders by 9th November at the latest!! ...This is what you do:

1. Choose your seeds and sundries
2. Fill out the order form
3. Keep the rest of the booklet for your records
4. To the total add £2.00 for the association administration and separate packing
5. Deliver the form & payment by 9th November
6. Wait for us to tell you when your order has arrived.

Send your order to either or
John Weedy, 10 Sibsey Street, LA1 5DF Lancaster
John Lambert, 6 Carr House Lane, LA1 1SW Lancaster

Kings Seed catalogue returns must be in by 09.11.09

CARTER'S
COLLECTIONS of GARDEN SEEDS
for 1867 will produce
A Complete Supply of Vegetables
"All the Year Round."
Arranged to suit the requirements of large, medium, small, and very small Families,
and forwarded immediately on receipt of Post-Office Order.
The Prices, as follow, include box and packing:—No. 1, 10s. 6d. No. 2, 21s. ; No. 3, 42s. ; No. 4, 63s.
J. Carter and Co.

recommend collection No. 3, price 42s., as being a most useful assortment of garden seeds suited for a medium-sized family.

Beans, Broad Windsor .. 1 qt.	Cucumber, Blk. Spine .. pkt.
— Monarch "	Endive, French curled lrg. pkt.
— Green Nonpariel "	— Imperial Batavian "
— French Forcing .. 1 pt.	Leek, Ayton Castle "
— Dun "	Lettuce, White Cos "
— Scarlet Runners "	— Giant Brown "
Beet, St. Osyth 1 oz.	— Drumhead "
— Pine Apple "	— Wheeler's Tom Thumb "
Kail, Cottagers' lrg. pkt.	Mustard 1 pt.
— Asparagus "	Melon, Carter's Excelsior pkt.
— Dwarf Scotch "	— Lady Sefton "
Brussels Sprouts (best) "	Onion, Giant Madeira .. 1 oz.
Broccoli, Carter's Champ. "	— Reading 4 oz.
— Snow's Winter "	— James's Keeping .. 2 oz.
— Adams's Early "	— Silver-skin 1 oz.
— Knight's Protecting "	Parsley, Dunnett's Gar-
— Purple Cape "	nishing 1 oz.
— Wilcove "	Parsnip, Student 2 oz.
Cabbage, Carter's Early "	Peas, Carter's Early .. 1 qt.
— Tom Thumb "	— Dickson's Favourite "
— Enfield Market "	— Prizetaker 2 qt.
— Dwarf Nonpl. "	— Champion of England 2 qt.
— Early York "	— Advancer, new .. 1 qt.
— Sugarloaf "	— Bishop's Long-pod "
— Couve Tronchuda "	— Carter's Victoria "
— Savoy, dwarf curled "	— Veitch's Perfection .. 2 qt.
— " Drumhead "	— Carter's Surprise .. 1 qt.
— " Dwarf ulm "	Radish, Wood's Frame .. 2 oz.
Carrot, French, Forcing 1 oz.	— Short-top 4 oz.
— Early Horn 2 oz.	— Scarlet Turnip 2 oz.
— Selected Scarlet .. 3 oz.	— White Turnip "
Cauliflower, Carter's dwarf.	Rampion pkt.
— Mammoth lrg. pkt.	Spinach, Summer ½ pt.
— Walcheren "	— Winter "
Celery, Incomparable <i>éwif</i>	Salsify lrg. pkt.
— White "	Scorzonera "
— Manchester red "	Turnip, Early Six-week 1 oz.
Cress, plain ½ pt.	— White Dutch "
— Curled 4 oz.	— Orange Jelly "
— Australian 1 oz.	— Yellow Malta "
— American "	Tomato pkt.
Cucumber, Carter's Cham-	Vegetable Cream, Moore's .. "
pion pkt.	Pot Herbs 5 pkt.
— Lynch's Star of the	
West "	

A Select List of New and Choice
Flower, Farm, and Garden Seeds
forwarded gratis and post-free
on application to
James Carter and Co., 237 and 238, High Holborn, London, W.C.

FLOWER and VEGETABLE SEED
CATALOGUE.—BUTLER, M'CUCCLOCH, and CO.'S Spring
Catalogue, containing descriptions of over 1600 species and
varieties of Flower Seeds and a list of all the novelties of the
season, is now ready. Forwarded free.
South-row, Covent-garden Market, London, W.C.

Have we got news for you? ALMA and new leases?

This is an email circulated to all allotment associations in Lancaster & Morecambe by Tom Jones chair of ALMA (The Association of Lancaster & Morecambe Allotments)

Dear All

Lancaster City Council's Cabinet met at Lancaster Town Hall on Tuesday 6th October 2009, Item 6 on the agenda was the future arrangements for all Lancaster City Council allotment sites.

Councillor Emily Heath put forward the proposal of the Allotment Task Group that sites should pay a peppercorn rent and retain the difference in rent for running costs/maintenance and improvements to the allotment sites. Also that a sum of £20,000 per annum, over 5 years, be spent on bringing allotment infrastructure up to a better standard.

I am very pleased to tell you that this proposal was passed unanimously by the Cabinet and various members praised the past work of Allotment Committees and ploholders.

Further to this, it was agreed that, in addition a new lease, each site would be asked to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Lancaster City Council. Details will be provided later.

Although the Cabinet's decision has to be ratified by the full Council at their next meeting, I am assured that this will happen and I was informed that the new leases have already been drawn up.

This means that we have obtained all that we asked for.

May I take this opportunity to thank the Allotment Task Group for all their efforts over the past 5 years. Special thanks to Emily Heath, Richard Tulej, Jill Wesolowski and John Lambert.

Congratulations to all concerned.

Tom Jones
Chair
ALMA

New plot holders - Get your forks out!!

For those of you on the extension that are new to allotments and haven't yet made much of a start...**now is the time!**

If you intend to be able to have crops next year your plots need digging now in preparation for spring.

If you've realised you don't want your allotment - please let us know so some of the 85 waiting can have a chance.

Green Manure

Green manures are types of plants that are sown on vacant land to increase soil fertility, prevent soil erosion through rain and wind, and improve soil structure.

This is not a new idea but reckoned to be good farming practice in eighteenth century England. This practice fell out of favour but continued in certain Mediterranean countries and China.

Now, with an increased emphasis on none exploitive horticulture, many allotment growers are recognising that green manuring is a useful complement to conventional compost and manures.

In the allotment, green manure will protect the soil over winter. This then can be dug back into the soil at the end of winter. The green manure must be allowed to breakdown completely before planting in spring which takes a couple of months so don't forget to dig it in Feb/ March time.

Green manures can be use for longer to rest the soil, but don't let the crop seed or the goodness is lost. Below is a short list of green manure seeds. Choose a type to suit the season and the length of time you want to grow it.

Hungarian Ryegrass | Poached egg plant (Laminates douglasii) | Clover | Trefoil | Phacelia (P. tanacetifolia) Loved by Bees!

There are many web sites that will be able to give you more information and enable you to buy green manure seeds.

www.GreenManure.co.uk
www.gardenorganic.org.uk/factsheets/g3.php
www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profiles0802/green_manure

Bee happy!

Imagine how your allotment would look if there were no bees to pollinate your vegetables, fruit and flowers? This is not a make believe scenario as sadly there has been a dramatic decline in the number of bees in the UK and abroad. Indeed, without beekeepers to care for honeybees they could disappear within the next few years.

In response to several requests from allotmenters the committee has agreed that one of the new quarter plots should be used for beekeeping. This will provide space for up to 4 beekeepers, with no more than 2 hives each. The new 'Bee Plot' would be surrounded by a 6 ft fence, a locked gate and hedging. The hives would be secured to the ground and strapped to prevent them being knocked over in the event of unwanted intruders.

The new 'bee plot' will cost the Fairfield Allotment Association nothing. There are grants available for the setting-up costs (fencing, hedging and gate) and the beekeepers will provide their own bees and equipment

Any allotmenter can apply to keep bees on the 'bee plot' but will be expected to first complete the courses offered by Lancaster Beepers <http://www.lancaster-beekeepers.org.uk/> and have taken, or be intending to take, the basic exam of the British Bee Keeping Association <http://www.britishbee.org.uk/> Bee keeping is a fascinating hobby but it is also a serious and responsible undertaking. For these reasons allotment holders interested in keeping bees need training and must have a good understanding of how to care for their bees.

Of course, there will be allotment holders who are interested in bees and beekeeping but do not want or are unable to keep bees. Part of the funding applications for the 'bee plot' will include bee suits for 2 adults and 2 children. This will enable anyone wanting to see what bee keeping is about at close quarters. The beekeepers will also be delighted to share their interest and enthusiasm.

If anyone has any questions or concerns about the new 'Bee Plot' then please contact Barbara Mauthe (Plot 23b/24a, 01524 840928) or Ruth MacKenzie (Plot 10A, Tel 01524 382940).



Surplus Sale & Official Opening

A big thank you to all who organised, volunteered, donated and bought stuff at our first surplus sale. It raised a massive £360! Which when added to the profit from the stall at Funday means we have raised just over £600 pounds from those 2 events alone. Well done!



LOTTERY FUNDED

Phase one of the allotment improvements is complete with the extension, harvesting hedge & new gates. We already have plans to improve our water storage and provide secure storage for the mower. We're also, as you'll read in the newsletter, raising funds to allow some beekeepers on the plots.

We have been generously supported in this work by...Awards for All (Lottery), The Galbraith Trust, LCC Climate Change Fund, LCC Environmental Directorate, a Local Gateway Grant & The City Council Allotments Fund, we are currently waiting results of applications to the

COOP and Green Partnership Awards. Our own fundraising includes our stall at Fairfield Funday, the Surplus Sale, donations on top of rent and of course the seed scheme. We're also starting thinking about another recipe book. Have you got ideas, suggestions for either site improvements or events you'd like to see happening?

Water Use & Collection

Could we please remind everyone again to keep a close eye on the water tanks as they have signs of wear please report any problems immediately. Taps should not be left open.

As part of winter maintenance can all plot holders please try and connect water butts to all sheds and greenhouses.

Repairing and replacing the main water containers is high on our list of improvements for the next year.

Paths

Some of the small grass paths which divide plots, are looking a little unkempt so please make an effort to keep them tidy. This should be a shared task with neighbouring plots.

Hedges

If you are on the new plots please could you also help us out by chopping down the weeds under the new hedge opposite your plot. This will really help the hedge get established.

committee

The committee meets every other month at The Borough at 7.30pm. Next meetings - 07.01.10, 04.02.09 (AGM).

Your allotment committee is:

Acting Chair: Caroline Eames

Secretary: John Lambert,
6 Carr House Lane,
Lancaster LA1 1SW
01524 849371
secretary@fairfield-allotments.co.uk

Treasurer: George Burnett,
94 Westbourne Road,
Lancaster LA1 5JX
01524 62585

Gillian Allen, Jon Barry, John Weedy & Sid Duncan.

New members or observers always wanted. If any member does feel like helping out on the committee, or just coming to the meetings, you will be welcome.

forum

Since the launch, and re-launch, of the allotment website we have been asked on a number of occasions if it would be possible to have a section where members can ask questions, have discussions, share materials / equipment / seeds, ask for help, recommend varieties / suppliers / books / websites etc.

A (private) forum has been added to the website for members, the waiting list and guests. Although the forum has been set up as private anyone that joins should still be conscious of their own & others web privacy when choosing user names and posting comments.

To join - go to the forum page (<http://www.fairfield-allotments.co.uk/forum.html>) and register. You'll need an email address (which remains invisible to other users) and to choose a user name which others will see. Most users of discussion forums use a 'nickname' rather than real names, but that's up to you. As this is a private forum your 'application' to join will need to be approved. If we don't recognise your email address then we can't approve your application. If we don't have your email address then get in touch with John Lambert.

You should be able when you have registered to add new posts of your own, respond to other's posts as part of an open discussion or send responses directly to individuals messages.

Over two thirds of the association receive the newsletter by email so that means we have around 70 members who may join the discussion group; far more than you bump into on an average day at the allotment!

Don't worry if you're not used to this sort of discussion forum, it's probably new to most of us. Add new topics, reply to topics, ask questions...we'll see what works, and what doesn't and change what we can to suit demand. For those that are used to using this kind of forum, your help would be great in getting it started. Add and respond to topics, offer suggestions to get us novices contributing.

We look forward to receiving your registration requests and please, please, please... if it's not working...or you want something changing...or you have suggestions...let us know!