



February 2012



A Worm's Eye View

Reminders:

Wednesday, February 15:

- ⇒ Regular meeting—7:30—Bring a friend
- ⇒ Speaker: John Reaume—**"Wildflowers of Ontario"**
- ⇒ \$10.00 Annual membership fee due
- ⇒ Cheque due for 1812 Rose order
- ⇒ Cheque due for Cherrey Bus Lines tour to Canada Blooms and National Home Show—Thursday, March 26—Direct Energy Centre, Toronto (Tour & Bus \$45) See Attached Flyer
- ⇒ Sign up for the Agatha Christie production of **"The Unexpected Guest"** at Fergus Grand Theatre—Fergus Horticultural Group Night—Friday, March 30 at 8 pm—Cost \$17 each—Contact Kathy Bouma 519-843-7703
- ⇒ March 21—Fergus & District Horticultural Society Seed Exchange—Check your unused and collected seed stash for seeds you wish to exchange. Small coin or CD envelopes are ideal for transporting the seeds. Include on the package the Genus, Species & Variety (botanical & common names), if known. Please see the attached information sheets provided by Katherine Granger about the importance of preserving seeds that have not been genetically modified in any way.



Special Area Events

Saturday, Feb. 11—Seeds of Diversity—**Stratford's Seedy Saturday**
 Saturday, Feb. 25—Seeds of Diversity—**Kitchener's Seedy Saturday**
 Saturday, Feb. 25—**"Pollination Guelph Symposium"**—for more details go to their website at www.pollinationguelph.ca
 March 1—4—**Stratford Garden Festival** - stratfordgardenfestival.com
 March 27,28—Grand River Pizza Perfect Program, Grand River Raceway

Check out the Master Gardeners of Ontario website at www.mgoi.ca and the Guelph and Wellington County Master Gardeners at gwmastergardeners.mgoi.ca

Please forward any horticultural events or information of interest to our Society members to the editor by the last week of each month for our monthly newsletter.

Your input is appreciated.

Editor: Verna Smith FergusHortSocietyNewsletter@gmail.com (519) 787-4328

Our meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month, except July, August, and December.

Meetings start at 7:30 pm at Victoria Park Seniors Centre, 150 Albert Street, Fergus. Doors open at 7:00 pm

Please feel free to bring a guest to our meetings to enjoy the program and special speakers. If you are viewing this newsletter on the web, here is a link to our meeting location:

<http://maps.google.ca/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=150+Albert+St+W.+Fergus,+Ontario&sl=49.891235,-97.15369&ssp=19.558458,57.744141&ie=UTF8&ll=43.705329,-80.374775&spn=0.010703,0.028195&z=15&om=0>

Saturday, Feb. 11	Seeds of Diversity— Stratford's Seedy Saturday	Royal Canadian Legion, 207 St. Patrick St., Stratford 11-3
Saturday, Feb. 25	Seeds of Diversity— Kitchener's Seedy Saturday	Kitchener Public Library Country Hills Branch 9:30—3:30
Saturday, Feb. 25	<i>"Pollination Guelph Symposium"</i>	For details go to their website at www.pollinationguelph.ca
Sunday, Feb. 26 Victoria East Golf Club, Victoria Road, Guelph 9 am to 3pm \$40 includes a catered lunch	Guelph and Wellington County Master Gardeners annual 'A Day in the Garden' Workshop	The theme this year is "GARDEN DESIGN" and will feature a hands-on workshop as well as speakers. Seating will be limited, so reserve early to get your spot. For more information, please contact us by email at mgguelph@hotmail.com , or visit our website at www.gwmastergardeners.mgoi.ca
March 1—4	<i>Stratford Garden Festival</i>	stratfordgardenfestival.com
Wednesday, March 21	Seed Exchange	Fergus & District Horticultural Society regular meeting
March 27, 28	Grand River Pizza Perfect Program	Grand River Raceway
Wednesday, March 30	Fergus Grand Theatre—8pm	Agatha Christie production of "The Unexpected Visitor"

Learn ☀️ Grow ☀️ Share ☀️ Care ☀️ Teach





Yearning for those first signs of spring ...

Experience the first signs of spring at Canada Blooms. This Toronto flower and garden festival celebrates its 16th year as Canada's

premier horticultural show. Explore over six acres of dazzling displays of colour, texture and fragrance, designed by Canada's best landscaping talents.

This year, Canada Blooms will join with the National Home Show to create North America's largest home and garden event. Both shows are included in your admission.

Our bus (coach) leaves the Fergus Sportsplex at 8:30 a.m. sharp and arrives back at 7:00 p.m.

Date: Thursday March 22nd, 2012

Cost: \$45.00 - (includes transportation, admission to both shows & magazine)

Get your tickets early - bus fills up fast. To reserve your ticket telephone Roberta at 519-843-5892 or email her at sweet60@sympatico.ca

Bring your money to our February 15th meeting.

The bus is ours for the day so you can leave your coats etc. behind and enjoy this wonderful show.

No Parking, No Traffic, No Hassles

What the heirloom seed movement is about

The movement is made up of backyard gardeners and organic farmers dedicated to preserving seeds, some used by ancient Mesoamerican and Native American peoples or brought across the Atlantic by early immigrant populations. Most heirloom seeds (aka heritage seeds, non-hybrid seeds, non-GMO seeds, and open-pollinated seeds) date back hundreds of years to the early colonial period. These are seeds that have not been inbred or genetically altered in any way.

An heirloom seed is any seed that was introduced before the 1920's, before hybrid crops were first commercialized. They are named as such because they can be traced back to their origins, connecting us to our own heritage.

The term "open-pollinated" means that the seeds are fertile and come back year after year true to type, looking like their parent plants because of no genetic tampering or severe inbreeding.

The movement works to preserve plants that are adapted to specific soils of place (local), adaptable to climates, resistant to local pests and diseases, and produce healthier, more flavourful food.

Have you tasted a tomato from the grocery store lately—noticed how they do not taste like they used to? Flavor and nutrition have been replaced with long shelf life, fast growth, and uniform appearance. As a result, heirloom vegetables are being driven to extinction. There are hundreds of vegetable varieties that have already gone extinct. Only 5% of US apple varieties that existed just 200 years ago still exist today. Ninety percent of vegetable varieties have gone extinct over the last 100 years in the UK.

In addition to losing a vital food resource as heirloom vegetables grow extinct, there are other benefits of heirlooms that we lose as well. We lose the ability of vegetables to grow without the help of chemical pesticides and fertilizers. We lose vegetables that have exquisite taste, naturally store well without any genetic modifications, and which crop over long periods of time, reducing the threat of famine (commercial varieties are bred to crop all at once).

So far seed technology developments have only increased the power and profit of seed companies. Technological advances have focused on tolerance to pesticides and chemicals produced by the very same companies that sell these products. By controlling seeds, corporations link their consumers to their agricultural chemicals thus creating a complete dependence on the seed companies.

Birds and insects naturally carry pollen from one crop to another with no concern over what is hybrid and what is not. This results in pollution of heirloom crops.

Over the past 60 years multinational corporations have been gaining control over the **availability and distribution of seeds and continue to gain control of the world's food supply.** Modern seed production involves inbred plant varieties, genetically modified plant genes, and chemical sprays. Their patented and sterilized seeds prevent farmers and gardeners from saving and replanting.

CBC News posted the following: 'Super weed' found in Alberta: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/story/2012/01/12/super-weed-alberta.html>

Monsanto and DuPont have introduced a new and improved product: GMO plants with double resistance to two pesticides: Roundup and 2-4-D. They are currently awaiting approval in the US.

It hardly seemed coincidental that these two announcements came a day apart. The real danger is in engineering seed so that the world's primary food crops are increasingly unsustainable.

We extol the advantages of open-pollinated plants and preserving native species, yet we consume the very antithesis.

Growing heirloom seed is a way to preserve ancient plant genetics and maintain **nature's most quickly endangered resource, plant diversity**. Heirloom seeds grant the freedom to save seeds, breed new varieties, and encourage plant diversity. Diversity is important because it allows plants to continually adapt to changing environmental conditions and human needs.

You can claim your right to eat food without genetic contamination, chemical toxins, or decreased nutritional value. Heritage seeds produce food that is safe, healthy, and completely organic.

Seed-saving organizations and exchange networks like Seeds of Diversity have developed as a result. Heirloom seeds exist because of the heirloom seed movement. Seed varieties are disappearing. Self-sufficiency and food security is the legacy of heirloom seeds.

You can help!!



Seeds of Diversity



People Protecting the People's Seeds

Stratford, ON

Anything Grows presents Stratford's Seedy Saturday
Saturday February 11, 2012 11:00 am—3 p.m.
Royal Canadian Legion, 207 St. Patrick St

An event promoting our heritage seeds, seed growing, a seed exchange and speakers

Speakers

11:00 Jim Fitzgerald, Master Gardener—'Starting Seeds Successfully'

11:30 Steve Stacey, Local Community Food Centre—'A Place for Food'

12:00 Paul Jenkins, Owner, Wildflower Farm—'Our Natural Landscape'

12:45 Brenda Gallagher, Upper Thames—'Organic Vegetable Gardening'

1:30 Dr. John Pollard, Veterinarian—'The Importance and Plight of the Honey Bee'

2:15 Kim, owner, Hawthorn Farm Organic Seeds—'Growing Heirloom Vegetables'

Suggested Door \$3.00—Proceeds go to Seeds of Diversity Canada

Kitchener, ON

Kitchener Public Library Country Hills Branch
Saturday February 25, 2012 9:30-3:30

Hosted by the Kitchener Horticultural Society, Kitchener Master Gardeners and the Kitchener Public Library

Attend one of the eight workshops being offered by Kitchener Master Gardeners and vendors, bring along seeds to swap, or purchase seeds from local vendors. Wares will include heritage varieties. There will be displays from local community groups about their activities and Master Gardeners will be available to answer your questions.

Exhibits: 9:30 am to 2:30 pm

Contact: Bruce MacNeil brucemacneil2001@rogers.com 519-576-6034

Welcome to the Stratford Garden Festival



"Celebrating our Roots"

Dates & Times

Thursday, March 1 - Noon to 5:00 pm

Friday, March 2 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm

Saturday, March 3 - 10:00 am to 8:00 pm

Sunday, March 4 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Event Location

Stratford Rotary Complex

353 McCarthy Road

Stratford, Ontario

Admission - Tickets are available at the door

- \$9.00 per person
- Children 12 and under FREE
- \$20 for 4 day pass
- Pre-arranged groups of 15 or more, \$7 per person

For Information Contact:

dherman@on.lung.ca or call 519-271-7500



Guelph and Wellington County Master Gardeners
invite you to join us for the 16th annual
A Day in the Garden
Sunday, February 26, 2012

Location: Victoria Park East Golf Club, 1096 Victoria Rd South, Guelph
Doors open at 8:45am - Speakers from 9:30am to approx 2:30pm

Garden Design – Principles and Practice

Our Speakers

Christopher Campbell, Landscape Architect

John Reiter, Manager, Sheridan Nurseries
(Georgetown)

John Duthie, Owner, John C. Duthie
Landscape Design

\$40 for 3 great speakers, catered
lunch, demos and more!

To Register:

Call our hotline at 519-824-4120 ext. 56714

E-mail mgguelph@hotmail.com

Download the registration form at www.gwmastergardeners.mgoi.ca



Grand River Agricultural Society



Pizza Perfect at Grand River Raceway

This annual agriculture-education program is designed for Grade 3 students. The day-long program introduces children to agriculture in a fun, hands-on forum.

PIZZA PERFECT 2012, Grand River Raceway
March 27 and March 28 9:30—2:30

Fergus & District Horticultural Society members can volunteer on either day to help at the various Stations.

Why Pizza?

Agriculture and food topics fit virtually any component of classroom work. Pizza, arguably a favorite food of all students, typically represents **all four food groups identified by Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating**, and is an excellent topic for a comprehensive study of agriculture, nutrition, food processing, economics, mathematics, science, arts and language, even careers.

Pizza Perfect will endeavor to explore all of these subject areas, and more, with an activity-filled all-day program designed specifically for Grade 3/4 students. Enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers will assure a positive learning experience. A **pizza lunch will be provided for students' and volunteers' lunch.**

Consider that a simple pizza crust is made from grain, cheese is a product of our dairy industry, and meats and vegetables contribute to the wide variety of exciting toppings. These products are produced and transformed through a number of interesting processes which students are invited to explore.

The project has four components, each representing a specific aspect of "pizza production."

The areas will be identified by colour. Each group will experience all of the four areas, as follows:

Vegetables/ Soils (Green)

Dairy (Blue)

Grains (Yellow)

Meats (Red)

What Kinds of Activities?

Dairy Section:

- explore feed samples and learn about where the feed comes from
- find out how much a cow eats
- see how much milk is produced through a live milking demonstration
- visit calves on display
- talk with a veterinarian to discover how a dairy animal is examined, and some of the medical tools used
- nutrition activities and cheese making

Meats Section:

- see a live cow with her calf as well as a sow with her piglets
- find out how much feed and water they consume in a day
- meat alternative pizza using soy crumbles
- learn about the rate of gain of piglets
- sausage making

Soils and Vegetables Section:

- learn where common vegetables are grown in Ontario
- learn about the components of soil necessary for plants to grow
- transplant a seedling and take it home
- learn about growth cycles and plant nutrient requirements
- visit our greenhouse and do related activities

Grains or Field Crops Section:

- explore some of the machinery used in crop production
- examine the by-products of beef production
- test math skills by examining grain plants and estimating the ratio of stem, to root, to seed head
- identify and sort grain by color and use
- take a turn at grinding wheat into flour
- study common food labels for ingredients
- make dough and watch yeast grow.