

Somersham and District Allotment and Smallholding Association February 2018 Newsletter



Vicky Moseley, Secretary

What to do in March

The days are beginning to lengthen and, although it may not feel like it at times, the temperatures are slowly increasing day by day. The longer days are a trigger for new growth, and you will find that with the help of a little protection you can really go for those early sowings. They might not all make it, but it is still worth a try and you will have plenty of time to re-sow any failures. Your best friend this month is the weather man try to keep up to date with the local forecasts (especially with the "Beast from the East" on the way!), better still ask the advice of the gardeners around you who have years of experience to draw on.

Bonfires



Pic: Andy Bell

Can I remind you that whilst we do allow bonfires on the site, please can you be considerate of other plot holders, and our neighbours when lighting your fires? Only burn dry material such as dead wood, any green material like weeds etc should be composted. Bear in mind the wind strength, and direction, when planning your fire, and your bonfire must never be left unattended. If you have any concerns about an out of control fire please contact a committee member, or myself, as soon as possible.

Dogs

We have received some reports recently of dogs being out of control and running loose over other people's plots. It is in the Association rules that any dogs must be kept under control at all times, whether this is on a lead, or, in a fenced off area. The Committee is looking into new signage to be placed at all entrances to the site reminding anyone walking their dogs that it is private land and dogs must be kept on leads.

(I appreciate the pictured dog is not on a lead, but neither is it on an allotment...)



Pic: Andy Bell

Site Maintenance Work Parties

The next work party is **Sunday 25th February**. If you would like to get involved please call Geoff on 07525 901735 to let him know you are coming, the more, the merrier!

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Compost

We have a new stock of 70L bags of Mother Earth compost available for you to purchase at £4.50 a bag.

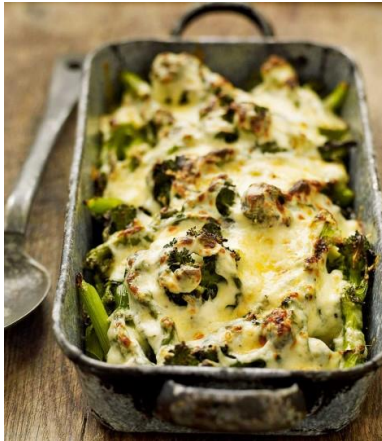
Avian Flu

Defra have announced that there is now a prevention zone across the whole of England. The prevention zone means bird keepers across the country must:

- Ensure the areas where birds are kept are unattractive to wild birds, for example by netting ponds, and by removing wild bird food sources;
- Feed and water your birds in enclosed areas to discourage wild birds;
- Minimise movement in and out of bird enclosures;
- Clean and disinfect footwear and keep areas where birds live clean and tidy;
- Reduce any existing contamination by cleansing and disinfecting concrete areas, and fencing off wet or boggy areas.

The prevention zone will be in place until further notice.

Recipe – Purple Sprouting Broccoli Gratin



Steam the broccoli over boiling water for around five minutes, until tender to the point of a sharp knife. Alternatively, cook it in boiling water until tender – three to four minutes – and drain well.

Heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the garlic and anchovy, and cook gently for a few minutes, crushing the anchovies down into the oil. Add the cream, let it bubble for two to three minutes until thickened and reduced by about a third, then add black pepper to taste, and salt if needed.

200g purple sprouting broccoli
1 tbsp olive oil, plus extra to finish
1 clove garlic, peeled and finely chopped
2 anchovy fillets
200ml double cream
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
20g breadcrumbs

Put the broccoli into a shallow gratin dish or ovenproof pan, pour over the cream mix, add a trickle of oil and scatter breadcrumbs on top. Grill for a few minutes until golden and bubbling, and serve at once.

Don't forget:

- **Do we have your e-mail address?** – if you have received this newsletter via post but have an e-mail address please contact me.
- **All contributions** to the newsletter are very welcome. If you have anything you would like to include in a future newsletter please let me know.