

Close to Home

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Disaster brings out the best

New Zealanders have been in shock over the past weeks following the devastating earthquake and aftershocks that hit Canterbury. The effects of this disaster are far reaching.

About 6,000 Housing New Zealand tenants are living in the Christchurch area, many of whom had their lives turned upside down. We continue to hold them foremost in our thoughts.

In the days after the earthquake, Housing New Zealand staff from all over the country travelled to Christchurch to check on tenants, fix homes, deliver water, help the elderly, and help people find emergency housing because they couldn't remain in their homes. The citizens of Christchurch were wonderfully generous, and took those left homeless into their homes.

There was a lot of damage. Chimneys collapsed, floors buckled, water cylinders burst, walls cracked. We started fixing homes within hours of the earthquake, and within five days we had completed urgent repairs on 1,500 homes. Because of the scale

of damage, we will be working our way through all the repairs for some time. We would like to thank our Christchurch tenants for their patience.

During this time of high need, we received a number of heart warming stories from you. Regional Manager Sharon Matson told of speaking to one of our tenants in the Addington Welfare Centre. He was gently cradling a newborn baby in his arms. When asked about the baby he commented that the baby wasn't his – it belonged to a single mum nearby who was struggling to cope with her other children.

Such stories are the fabric of strong communities in times of need and are great reminders of disaster bringing out the best in people.

If you are a Christchurch resident and experiencing any concerns following the quake, please contact us on 0800 801 601. ☎

Whoopee!



Spring is here! Daffodils and freesias are poking their heads up above ground, pink and white blossoms pepper the roadside, and the temperature is noticeably warmer. Now, we can open our windows to let the fresh spring air into our homes.

Many thanks to those who sent through their cheap and cheerful recipes for the competition in our June edition. Read about it on pages four and five.

In line with our efforts to better help those most in need, we have decided to reduce the number of issues of *Close to Home* by one and will now publish three issues each year with the next one due out in mid-February. We will continue to maintain a high quality newsletter with articles and information relevant to your daily lives.

Our heartfelt thoughts are extended to all our readers affected by the recent earthquake in Canterbury.

Ros .Editor



AUTHOR
Marie Winfield

Fruit fingers

Feijoas and mandarins are on the menu for a community of West Auckland children.

Thanks to a project to encourage more families to grow and eat their own fruit, 30 Housing New Zealand families in New Lynn received free feijoa and mandarin trees to grow.

Kerry Armstrong jumped at the chance to have the trees planted at her home.

"It's great for the kids," she says. "They love gardening and have their own tools to help in the garden."

Kerry's two active boys, Jesse, seven, and Joseph, four, have already been enjoying feijoas from the tree and are now eagerly waiting for the first mandarins to grow.

"The feijoas were the sweetest ones I've ever eaten. The boys love eating fruit – it's veggies that can be more of a challenge."

The "Feijoa and Mandarin Project" is a joint initiative between Housing New Zealand and the Auckland District Health Board. The families involved said that the cost of fruit means they don't buy as much as they'd like to.

If you want any advice on planting or growing your own fruit trees, check out the Fruity Gumboot website for tips and ideas. www.fruitygumboot.co.nz 📄



Jesse, Kerry and Joseph look forward to harvesting their first crop.

AUTHOR
Tamsin Vuetilovoni

Spring is in the air!



Plenty of sunshine and a bit of a breeze do wonders for freshening up your laundry.

Goodbye winter. Hello spring.

See you soon summer.

Have you noticed how the sun is warmer and days are longer? This is the best time to spring clean.

Here are a few tips to freshen up your house on a sunny spring day.

- Throw open your windows and let the warm air inside
- Give those windows a nice clean. All you need is hot water, a cloth, and newspaper to dry. They will be shiny and sparkling when the sun pours in
- Strip your bed and hang your duvet on the line (or if you don't have a line put it on a mat, or hang between two chairs outside)
- Put your pillows (without their pillowcases) on chairs outside
- Vacuum or sweep the house
- Dust away cobwebs
- Clean out your cupboards
- Make a daisy chain (see page 8)
- Sit outside in the sun with a cup of tea and a smile. 📄

What is happening during Spring?

- **Daylight savings** starts on Sunday 26 September
- **School term 3** ends on Friday 24 September
- **Labour Day** (public holiday) is on Monday 25 October



AUTHOR
Liz Niethe

Onwards and upward

Napier tenants Laki and Tasha, have set out on a new path in their lives – moving on from the two smaller homes they had when they first met into one larger home now that they're together; and upwards as Tasha waits to begin her nursing training at the local polytechnic in January.


Laki has kidney failure and needs a separate room for his home dialysis equipment. When the couple fell in love and made plans to live together, their existing homes were too small. They needed a home with three bedrooms for themselves and their children plus a spare room for the complicated dialysis equipment.

When a suitable one became available they transferred their leases and moved in together, freeing up two houses for others on the waiting list.

Between them Laki and Tasha have four children – two girls and two boys. There is plenty of room for everyone and the dialysis machine has its own room with a separate water connection.

The couple is delighted that the transfer has opened up new opportunities for them. Economically it is better because now they only have one power bill and one rent to pay. An added bonus is that Tasha is closer to the polytechnic.

"I'll do the three year training for nursing then a further year to qualify as a midwife," says Tasha. "I've worked in a pharmacy before but nursing and midwifery is my real goal. In a few years when I'm qualified we should be able to move on to other housing.

"This home will then be freed up for another family who needs it." 



Laki, Tasha and 19-month old Marley outside their home. The transfer has made such a positive difference to their lives.

Garden Awards update

We have some important news for you about the Garden Awards Competition.

The Garden Awards is a nationwide gardening competition for all state housing tenants, which we have held every two years. It was due to get underway again in October this year.

We have had a good think about the awards and have decided not to run them again.

We have held the competition four times now over the past eight years. We have had a great response from

many of you, and we've found some spectacular gardens.


But over time participation in the awards has dropped off, suggesting they have achieved all they can. All good things come to an end, and we have decided to bring the Garden Awards to a close.

A lot has changed in the economic environment and many New Zealanders are experiencing hard times. More people than ever need our help, so at

Housing New Zealand we are focusing our efforts on our main role – providing housing to those most in need.

We understand some of you will be disappointed – but don't stop gardening.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has participated or supported the awards.

If you have any questions please speak to your Tenancy Manager or call us on 0800 801 601. 



TASTE TESTERS

Thanks to all of you who took the time to write or email us with your favourite cheap and cheerful recipes. We received a wonderful mix; some even entered a selection of favourites!

Food consultant and author Adie McClelland judged the recipes and trialled the winning dish with her pupils from the He Huarahi Tamariki cooking class. It smelt delicious and was a huge success!

Adie's own collection of recipes in the *Black Dog Cottage Cookbook*, was one of New Zealand's best-selling books for 2009. 📖



Looking forward to lunch: from left Shontelle Brook-Ione, Laiana Lavakula, Adie, Katrina Brown, Joanna Huse and Sarah Smith.

Safety begins at home

In New Zealand more injuries happen at home than at work, on the road, or while playing sport.

In fact on average, someone in New Zealand is injured at home every 56 seconds! Around 25,000 people a year require hospitalisation from an injury that happened in their own home.

Housing New Zealand supported the Accident Compensation Corporation's 'Safety NZ Week' which ran in early September. We're encouraging our tenants to make just a few simple changes to make your home a safer place for you and your families.

A good place to start is in your kitchen. Your kitchen is one of the busiest rooms in the house – but unfortunately it's also one of the most accident-prone. Knives, heat, fire, cupboards, slippery floors and cleaning products cause tens of thousands of nasty injuries every year.

To get you started, here are the top five safety tips for the kitchen.

TOP FIVE TIPS FOR THE KITCHEN

- **Keep looking when you're cooking**
Never leave the kitchen if you're cooking on the stove, especially if you're frying. Have a fire extinguisher handy just in case.
- **Take care with power cords**
Keep electrical appliances close to powerpoints to reduce the chances of power cords being burnt or cut or pulled. Never let cords (or anything else!) dangle over the edge of the bench where a young child might pull on them.
- **Keep storage areas down low**
That way there's less chance of heavy items falling on you, and you have less need to climb up to get something.
- **Mop up water or spills immediately**
Water creates a significant and often invisible slipping hazard, especially on kitchen tiles or lino.



Cooking is fun – remember to supervise young children in the kitchen.

- **Always supervise children**
Children are often injured in kitchens. Cuts, burns and falls often lead to a hospital visit, especially for the under fives. Put knives away up high, fix your stove to the wall so it won't tip if climbed on, turn pot handles to the back of the stove and never leave anything hot near the edge of the bench where it could be grabbed. Better yet, never leave your child alone in the kitchen.

You can see more safety tips at www.homesafety.co.nz 📖



Annette wins!

Overall winner in the recipe competition was Annette Allen of Hamilton, with her recipe for Chicken curry and sweet winter mash. Annette has always enjoyed cooking. She never makes recipes exactly as written – preferring to use them only as a guide. Cakes are the exception!

Annette developed the winning recipe herself and has perfected it over time. Our judges agreed with that! She says that any leftovers freeze really well. It is not only cheap and cheerful, but nutritious and delicious as well. 🍴



Annette cooking up another tasty treat in her kitchen.

Chicken curry and sweet winter mash

6–8 chicken drumsticks
1 large onion, sliced thinly lengthways
2 cloves garlic, finely sliced
½ tsp turmeric powder
⅓ tin chopped tomatoes
1 level tsp cumin powder
2 level tsp coriander powder
1 level tsp ginger powder
¾ tsp chilli powder
1 level tsp garam masala powder
1 level tsp cracked fenugreek seeds
1 level tsp salt
ground black pepper to taste
1 cup water
Oil for frying

Add a little oil to a large pot and fry onions. They should be golden brown to get the proper flavour. When brown, add garlic and fry for a further minute or two.

Add turmeric powder and stir over heat for a few seconds to remove bitterness. Remove pot from heat and except for chicken, add all other spices, tomatoes and water.

Return pot to the element, stir mixture and allow to simmer uncovered for 10–12 minutes to reduce down liquid.

Stir and add chicken drumsticks, arranging them in top and tail fashion. Do not add any further water as liquid will come out of chicken. Bring slowly to the boil with lid on, then turn down to simmer.

Simmer for 45 minutes until chicken is tender. You will need to turn drumsticks once or twice during cooking to ensure they are evenly coated and cooked.

Serve with basmati rice and sweet winter mash. Serves 6–8 people.

Bake for 10-15 minutes at 180°C.

Sweet winter mash

2 parsnips
1 small swede
1 large carrot
1 tbsp butter
Salt and pepper to taste

Peel vegetables and cut them into small chunks.

Place all the vegetables together in a pot and put in enough water to cover halfway up the vegetables.

Add salt and cook until all the vegetables are fully cooked.

Drain off vegetable water (it's even delicious to drink) and mash vegetables with the tbsp of butter. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Our top entries:

The best three entries each received a slow cooker and cookbook:

- 1st: Annette Allen, Hamilton
- 2nd: Kirsten Sweeney, Lower Hutt
- 3rd: Angela Stainer, Wellington

For other great recipes, \$50 Warehouse vouchers were sent to:

Kathleen Brown, Hamilton; Kristina Hamilton, Christchurch; Diane Harris, Christchurch; Laumouna Lino, Auckland; Marguerite McQueen, Christchurch; Elsie McRae, Onehunga; Kirsten Sweeney, Lower Hutt; Mary Tarres, Christchurch; Kay Trengrove, Auckland



Annette receiving her prize from Debbie Knaap of the Hamilton Neighbourhood Unit.



Have your say

Are you, your family or people you know enrolled to vote?

Making sure you are correctly enrolled means you are ready to vote whenever there is an election.

A by-election is coming up in the Mana electorate in Wellington, and next year there is a general election to select who represents you in Parliament and who runs the country.

If you are enrolled and are a new tenant or have moved to another Housing New Zealand property and have forgotten to update your new address you need to do it now.

“When you shift house you also need to shift your enrolment details,” says Murray Wicks, National Manager of the Electoral Enrolment Centre. “Make sure you update your enrolment details by telling us what your new address is.”

It's easy to update your details or enrol. Go online to www.elections.org.nz or get an enrolment form at any Post

Shop, by Freetexting your name and address to 3676, or by calling Freephone 0800 36 76 56.

If you've moved to a new area or electorate you and any family members over the age of 18 must be enrolled there once you've lived in your new home for one month.

Every year the Electoral Enrolment Centre removes tens of thousands of people from the electoral roll because they have moved house and not updated their details.

“Being able to have your say on things like who runs the country is one of the most powerful rights people in New Zealand have. Don't lose that by forgetting to enrol or update your details,” says Murray.

For more information go to www.elections.org.nz or Freephone 0800 36 76 56. 📞



RENT PAYMENTS OVER CHRISTMAS

With only a few months until Christmas, now's the time to make plans to keep your rent payments on track.

Christmas can be expensive, and it's easy to get into financial difficulty. It's important to plan ahead so you can keep paying your rent on time.

Most Housing New Zealand tenants pay their rent automatically. If you receive a benefit from Work and Income, it's free to get your rent paid directly from your benefit. If you're

working, we can help you get your rent paid from your bank account. Some employers will pay your rent directly from your wages.

Set up an automatic payment now and you won't have to worry about missing any rent payment over Christmas and the New Year. Don't put it off – talk to your housing or

tenancy manager or call us anytime on 0800 801 601. Remember, Housing New Zealand is not able to accept cash for any payments. 📞





Housing New Zealand launches its Customer Promise.

Every day 1,150 Housing New Zealand staff are dedicated to providing you with the best possible service.

The Customer Promise highlights six commitments that the customer can expect from us.

Chief Operating Officer Stephen McArthur says, "The Customer Promise has been developed to capture what's most important in our relationship with you. We want to work alongside you – in partnership, that's why the Customer Promise also says what we need from you."

The Customer Promise is detailed below. You can expect us to:

- be honest, fair and objective
- have the right skills and knowledge
- do what we say we will do

- listen to you and understand your individual circumstances
- provide you with the right information and advice, at the right time
- make it easy for you to communicate with us.

In return we need you to:

- provide us with the right information at the right time
- keep any agreements with us
- tell us if your situation changes
- treat us like you like to be treated. 🏠



114 NEEDY FAMILIES HOUSED

Over the last year 114 homes have been freed up for needy families, after it was identified that those living in them had failed to tell Housing New Zealand about their true personal and financial circumstances.

This resulted in their tenancies being terminated.

"People who fail to disclose investments and income to obtain a state house and taxpayer subsidised rent deprive other people in genuine need of housing," says Lisa Tipping General Manager, Governance and Assurance.

"It is just not fair that we have families in need waiting for state housing assistance, while others, who already have the benefit of a state home are not operating within the rules."

Housing New Zealand currently has over 100 cases of tenant related dishonesty before the courts. If convicted of fraud, sentences range from community work to home detention to imprisonment.

If you have any questions about disclosing income or assets, contact your tenancy manager or the contact centre 0800 801 601. 🏠

4
KIDS

TREEHOUSE IS THE
'KIDS ONLY' ZONE FOR
CLOSE TO HOME.

TREEHOUSE!

HOW TO MAKE A DAISY CHAIN

Close to Home went out to a Waitangirua playgroup recently to take photos for this story. We had a lot of fun making the daisy chains but celebrating Cassidy's birthday with chocolate cake was definitely the highlight of the day!

HERE'S HOW YOU DO IT ...

1



FIND YOUR DAISIES

Although we used chrysanthemum daisies on the day, you can also use common lawn daisies. Pick around 25 daisies for your chain. Make sure you pick them with long stems.

2

Splitting the stem. This requires a bit of dexterity!



JOIN THE DAISIES

Sit down on the grass with your daisies and start making your chain. Make a cut in the stem with your fingernail. It doesn't need to be long, just enough to thread another daisy stem through it.

3



CUT AND THREAD AGAIN

Now make a cut in the stem of the second daisy. Thread a third flower through that stem, and keep going until it is big enough to sit on your head.

JUST JOKES!



What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
Frostbite

What dogs keep the best time?
Watch dogs

Why did the tomato turn red?
It saw the salad dressing.

Why did the boy eat his homework?
Because the teacher said it was a piece of cake!

4

Toakase Otukolo working on her chain.

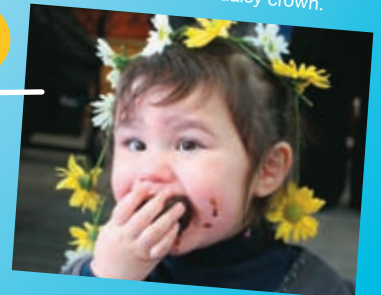


FINISH THE CHAIN

When you are ready to finish the chain, make a cut that is about twice as long as the others and fit the entire head of your first flower through it, then pull gently to tighten.

5

Birthday girl Cassidy Asi-Leggott celebrates her 2nd birthday with chocolate cake and a daisy crown.

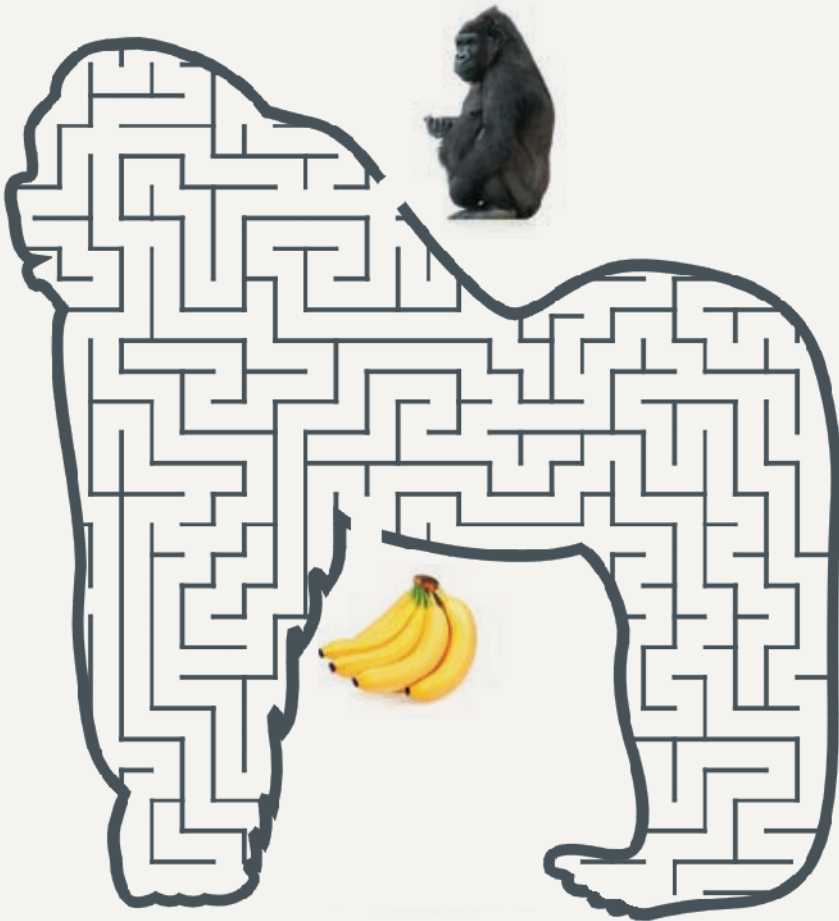


CROWN YOURSELF DAISY QUEEN OR KING

Wear your daisy chain and play in the sunshine with the fairies.

Help the gorilla through the maze to find the bananas!

MAIZE!



KIDS IN THE KITCHEN!

Whip up some baking for your friends or family.

Basic Biscuits

- 75g butter
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1¾ cup flour
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 1 cup of additives (coconut, chocolate pieces, dried fruit etc)

Preheat oven to 180°C.
 Grease an oven tray.
 Cream butter and sugar.
 Add egg, beat again.
 Add flour, baking powder and additives. Mix with a spoon until ingredients bind together.
 Use a dessertspoon, or teaspoon and get enough dough to roll into a ball.
 Place on the tray. Press with a fork to flatten to about 1cm high.
 Bake for 10–15 minutes at 180°C



REMEMBER! Safety First

Sudoku MINI

Each row and column and must contain the numbers 1 through 4.

		3	
4			
		1	
2			

Great kids website

Want to create your own monkey avatar?

Then build and decorate your own treehouse, play games like TicTacPoo, and hang out with kids from more than 150 countries – all in a virtual world that cares about the planet? Check out www.minimonos.com and see how much fun it can be to change the world.



minimonos
<http://minimonos.com>



Could it be a Heart attack?



A heart attack is a frightening event, and you probably don't want to think about it happening to you or someone you know.

If you learn the signs of a heart attack and what steps to take, you can save a life – maybe your own.

What are the warning signs of a heart attack?

Many people think a heart attack is sudden and intense, like a “movie” heart attack, where a person clutches his or her chest and falls over.

The truth is that many heart attacks start slowly, as a mild pain or discomfort.

Your symptoms may even come and go. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help.

Even those who have had a heart attack may not recognise their symptoms, because the next attack may be completely different.

It's important to learn the warning signs of a heart attack.



Being active helps in staying healthy.

Warning signs

- **Chest discomfort**
Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the centre of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain, lasting more than 10–15 minutes.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body**
Can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, stomach or shoulder.
- **Shortness of breath**
Often comes along with chest discomfort.
- **Other symptoms**
May include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are more likely to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting and back or jaw pain.

Learn the signs – fast action can save lives.

If you or someone you're with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, call 111 and get to a hospital right away.

For more information on heart health, visit the [Heart Foundation website](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz) www.heartfoundation.org.nz

Cooking tips for a healthy heart

Cut out the fat

- Cut all visible fat off meat
- Skim fat off stews, casseroles, soups and gravies
- Use polyunsaturated margarine or oil in small amounts in cooking or when spreading on bread
- Choose cooking methods that do not require the addition of fat, eg. microwaving, grilling, baking, steaming or stir frying
- Many takeaway meals are high in fat. If you do choose to have takeaways, have a small amount of a low fat takeaway option
- Do not fry foods in large amounts of any type of fat or oil
- Do not add fat to roasts
- Choose low-fat varieties of milk, cheese and yoghurt
- Serve meat and milk products in moderate amounts.

Keep salt down

- Limit the use of added salt during cooking. If you do add salt, use iodized salt.
- Flavouring such as herbs, spices and fruit juice can be used to increase the flavour of food without adding extra salt

For more useful advice, visit the Heart Foundation website www.heartfoundation.org.nz

Healthy to the core: simple apple treats!

The beauty of apples (apart from the delicious crunch) is that they're good for your heart health and available all year round.



Cooked apples do not need sugar added to them. They are excellent raw, stewed, baked or in fruit salad, sauce, muffins, pancakes, pies, crumbles to name but a few.

At this time of year, apples are very cheap!



Stewed apple

Ingredients

Apples
Water
1–2 teaspoons lemon juice
Cinnamon, cloves or raisins if desired

Method

1. Peel, core and slice the amount of apples that you would like to cook.
2. Combine the apples in a saucepan with a small amount of water and bring to the boil.
3. Cook until the apples are soft.
4. Lemon, cinnamon, cloves, or raisins can be added for extra flavours.

TIP

01

Firm cooking apples are ideal for stewing. Granny Smiths are also a good choice.

TIP

02

The recipe for stewed apples can be used for pears as well. Excellent with roast pork or pancakes.

TIP

03

For extra texture in muffins, you can add in a half cup of sultanas, raisins, dates or chopped walnuts with the stewed apple.



SOMETHING SWEET

Apple muffins

Ingredients

- ½ cup golden syrup
- 1 cup trim milk
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup stewed apple
- 1 cup flour
- 3 cups bran flakes
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp mixed spice

Method

1. Warm the golden syrup with the milk and stir in the baking soda.
2. Mix this with the remainder of the ingredients.
3. Pour the mix into an oil sprayed muffin tin and bake at 180°C for 10–15 mins.
4. Cool in tin for 5 mins before removing to rack for cooling.

Makes 12. 🍷



Garden diary

Sept

- Plant out cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuces, onions and silverbeet.
- Hoe around all growing crops – loose soil warms more quickly.
- Set out seed potatoes for sprouting. Plant seed potatoes now if your area is frost-free; at end of the month if slightly frost-prone.
- Water indoor plants as the weather gets warmer.
- Feed established fruit trees with citrus food.
- Remove winter flowering annuals and replace with summer bloomers.



Oct

- October's a great month for planting, and a good time to feed the entire garden.
- Sow cucumbers, dwarf and runner beans, marrows, melons and pumpkins at the end of the month.
- Plant summer vegetables such as beans, sweet corn, tomatoes and zucchinis once the soil is warm enough. Stake peas.
- Plant basil, which grows well with tomato plants. It repels pests and promotes healthy growth.
- Ensure the bursting buds of grape vines, kiwifruit and berry fruits are given a fungicide spray.
- Sow or plant warm-climate fruits such as citrus, passionfruit, guavas and tamarillos.



Nov

- It should be safe to plant frost-tender vegetables – chillies, cucumbers, zucchini, eggplants, kumara, peppers, dwarf and runner beans, marrows, melons, pumpkins and sweet corn.
- Sow beds of brussels sprouts, cabbages, cauliflowers, leeks and broccoli.
- Start harvesting asparagus, beetroot, broad beans, cabbages, cauliflowers, lettuces, radishes, spring onions, spinach and turnips.
- Continue to mound up potatoes.
- Holes in your potato foliage could be signs of attack by the potato tuber moth. Water well to discourage them.
- To encourage tomato flower set, spray with a mixture of 1 part sugar to 9 parts water. Remove side shoots, and tie plants securely to stakes.



Contact Publication enquiries should be made to closetohome@hnzc.co.nz www.hnzc.co.nz

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