

# March 2019 Newsletter

*In a garden you learn the value of time. Weeding, like farming, is never accomplished. It's an activity, not a result, so a good gardener learns not to fret about finishing a job. It's all in the doing. Otherwise, the quack grass will drive you insane."*

*Reprinted, with permission, from "Trauma Farm: A Rebel History of Rural Life," by Brian Brett*

## Upcoming

The April meeting of PDHS will be on Tuesday, April 10, 7p.m. at St. Paul's United Church. Our speaker will be Sheila Sim of Hobbit Hill Studio in Westport speaking on garden design.

## District 2 AGM

The Ontario Horticultural Association District 2 Annual General Meeting will be held on April 13, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., hosted by Pembroke Horticultural Society, Zion Lutheran Church, 454 Miller Street, Pembroke. If you wish to attend, please let Barb Smith know. District 2 Photo Competition closes March 31st. A great way to showcase your prize photography.

## Ottawa Orchid Show

The Ottawa Orchid Society show will be held on April 27 and 28 at the RA Centre, Riverside Drive, Ottawa.

## Canada Blooms

March 8 to 17, 2019. If you are in Toronto during this time period, take in the Canada Blooms show

- well worth a visit. For more information - <https://canadablooms.com>.

## Peterborough Garden Show "Coming Up Roses"

Show Dates: April 26-27-28, 2019  
For more information - <https://peterboroughgardenshow.com>.

## Junior Gardeners

Robin McIntosh is busy coordinating the Junior Gardeners program for 2019. We will be teaching eight classes in six schools this year. The program runs from Thursday, April 11 until May 16. It is a very basic gardening course that is taught to Grade 3 classrooms in the schools in Perth, Lanark, Glen Tay and North Elmsley. We depend on our volunteer members to make this program a success every year. If you are interested in volunteering for this program, please see Robin.

Our program involves a lot of recycled supplies that we depend on our members to collect and bring. The following supplies are needed:



Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District  
Horticultural  
Society

P.O. Box 494  
Perth, ON, K7H 3G1  
[www.perthhortsociety.com](http://www.perthhortsociety.com)

District #2 of the  
Ontario Horticultural  
Association

**Co-Presidents:** Linda Bartlett, Madeline Archer • **Newsletter:** Irene Hofmann

[www.perthhortsociety.com](http://www.perthhortsociety.com)

1. Strawberry containers - we use these for greenhouses for growing tomato and marigold seeds
2. Large yogurt containers 750 ml size - we use these to start potato plants
3. Tuna cans - we use these to make flower arrangements for Mother's Day
4. Canadian Tire money - we use this to buy soil and other garden supplies.

## Helpful Seeding Hints

By: Larry Hodgson

### TEST OLD SEEDS BEFORE YOU SOW

Most seeds are able to germinate at least 2 to 3 years after harvest if they have been kept dry and not too hot; some in fact are good for 7 years or more. (For a list of seeds of some 150 common garden plants and their normal conservation time under home conditions.

But what gardener has never found an old pack of seeds left in some forgotten corner, seeds you suddenly want to try again? But if you sow them and they don't come up, you've wasted pots full of sowing mix or space in the garden and lots of time. Isn't there a way to test the germination of older seeds before you actually sow them?

Fortunately, there is. And it's very easy to do.

A few weeks before the intended sowing date, place ten seeds on a piece of moistened paper towel and fold the paper in half, covering the seeds. Now, place the folded paper inside a clear plastic bag, seal it and move it to a warm location. After 3-21 days (depending on the type of seed), you should have germination ... if the seeds are indeed still alive.

If 7 or more seeds germinate, the seeds are still in very good condition and you can sow them as usual. If 4 to 6 seeds germinate, their germination is below par, but still reasonable: sow them twice as thickly as you would normally.

If 3 seeds or fewer germinate, the seeds are well past their prime and, unless the variety is irreplaceable, sowing them will probably not be worthwhile, as the seedlings will probably germinate at an even lower rate in soil. Besides, even if they do come up, weak seeds tend to pro-

duce feeble or unhealthy plants. Time to get out and buy fresh seed!

### CHICKEN WIRE SEEDING GUIDE

When sowing trays of seeds, you're usually told to space them about 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart, but rather than having to get out a ruler and take careful measurements, why not use a piece of chicken wire as a guide?

This widely available wire grid already has a 1-inch (2.5 cm) hexagonal mesh, exactly the spacing you need. You can even fix the grid onto a frame if you plan to use it often.

Simply cut a section of chicken wire the size of the tray using a pair of wire cutters, then place the wire grid over a tray filled with sowing mix. Punch a hole with a pencil of the appropriate depth (usually three times the height of the seed) in the center of each "cell," then insert a seed. Continue until the whole tray is done, then remove the grid, add a thin layer of seeding mix to cover the holes and water carefully.

When your seedlings germinate, they'll be perfectly spaced apart, giving the result a professional appearance. Come summer and your "seeding guide" will be useful for outdoor sowing too.

## New Vegetables To Grow In 2019

By: Dr. Leonard Perry, University of Vermont

Each year the best of the new annual flowers and vegetables are judged nationwide, and the winners are given the All-America Selections (AAS) designation. To be an AAS winner, plants must show improvements over any similar existing cultivars (cultivated varieties). This year's seven vegetable winners include a melon, watermelon, sweet pepper, potato, and five tomatoes. Similar to most vegetables, these grow best in full sun (at least six to eight hours direct sun per day), and a well-drained soil (preferably one with lots of organic matter, such as compost).

**Orange Silver Wave** is an exotic melon, bred in South Korea but which has rated well in trials in this country. It has five-inch, oval fruits (up to six per plant) that have very sweet orange flesh on the inside, and unique skin color of light green and yellow with darker green markings. Whether grown in the ground or in a container, a heavy-duty trellis is suggested to keep fruits and plants off the ground, meaning less disease. In the garden, space plants two feet apart and

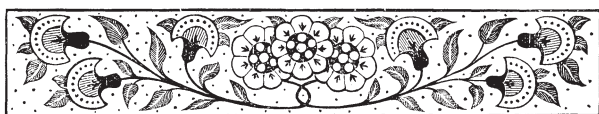


figure on about 75 days to harvest from sowing seeds, or 45 days from planting small plants (transplants).

**Cal Sweet Bush** is a compact watermelon, with bushy vines less than two feet long. Yet it still can produce two or three fruits in the garden, or usually one fruit if grown in a container. Fruits are round to oval, a foot or less across, and 10 to 12 pounds. The rind is dark green and mottled, the flesh is bright red. In the garden, space plants just over one foot apart and figure on about 90 days from sowing to harvest, or 65 days from planting transplants which you started earlier in small peat pots or containers.

**Just Sweet** is a sweet pepper with shiny and rich yellow, elongated fruits. They are about three inches long, and with four lobes like a bell pepper, only smaller. Even though plants can reach three feet high, they are bred to be sturdy, so shouldn't need staking. With plants being upright, only spreading about 15 inches wide, you can space them this distance apart. This makes them good for containers, in addition to gardens. Since it needs about 120 days from sowing to harvest, in colder climates you may want to start them from transplants. These take about 75 days from planting out to harvest.

**Clancy** is the first potato, grown from seeds, to be chosen an AAS winner. Potatoes are red to rose on the outside, and creamy white to yellow on the inside. The texture is between yellow-skinned and russet potatoes, making it great for mashing or boiling. Fruit are round to oblong, four to five inches long and three to four ounces in weight. Plant them in containers, or one foot apart in the garden, figuring at least three months from setting out transplants.

**Chef's Choice Black** is the sixth in this Chef's Choice series, a beefsteak type tomato with a mottled outside color of dark red and dark green, and inside flesh color of deep crimson. The juicy flesh is reported to have a nice, slightly salty flavor. Plants are vining (indeterminate) to about five feet long, so you'll need to stake them. A good season, site, and climate may result in 30 or more of the eight-ounce fruits (five to six inches across) per plant. Space plants about two feet apart in the garden, and figure on about 95 days from sowing seeds to first harvest, or about 75 days from planting transplants.

**Red Torch** is a tomato with small, striped and oblong red fruit—about one and a half inch long, and under two-ounce weight each. It is relatively early fruiting, needing about 70 days from transplanting. The recommendation is to start this one indoors and grow in small pots, sowing about six weeks before planting outside after the last frost. Space plants about two feet apart in

the garden. The indeterminate plants, growing five or more feet high, will need staking.

**Fire Fly** is a new cherry-type tomato, with pale yellow fruits smaller than a cherry tomato but larger than a currant tomato—about one inch across and weighing only about one-half ounce. Fruits are juicy and super sweet, with a mild acidity. You should stake or cage the indeterminate plants, which can reach five to six feet high and produce up to 500 or more fruits per plant! Space plants about two feet apart in the garden, and figure on about 100 days to first harvest from sowing seeds, or 80 days from planting transplants.

**Sparky** is a cherry tomato with round, red fruits striped yellow, about one inch across and one ounce in weight. They're flavorful and sweet, relatively early to mature (about 70 days from transplanting), and prolific (often 60 or more fruits per plant). The indeterminate plants reach five to six feet high, so need caging or staking. Space them about two feet apart in gardens and, if sowing seeds direct to the garden, figure on about 100 days to first harvest.

**Mountain Rouge** is a new pink addition to the "Mountain" tomato series, resistant to several diseases including late blight. The beefsteak tomatoes weigh 12 to 14 ounces, on indeterminate plants four to six feet high. They are said to have an heirloom flavour, a good mix of sugar and acidity. Plants begin producing in just 73 days from transplanting out young plants, two feet apart, and grow well in cool climates.

Since most of these new varieties won't be at garden stores, you'll need to buy seeds (either locally or from catalogues) and start them yourself. You can find out more details and photos on these and other past AAS winners, both vegetables and flowers, from the AAS website ([allamericaselections.org](http://allamericaselections.org)).

## District 2 Photography Competition

It's that time again! Time to start sending in your lovely photos for the annual OHA District 2 Photography Competition. Whether you are a beginner or more advanced photographer, all photos are welcome. So look through your photos from the last two years and see what you have. You might be surprised.

For the travelers out there, a bonus class has been added - Native plants from around the world.

Send in your photos to [district2photos@gmail.com](mailto:district2photos@gmail.com). The deadline is **March 31, 2019**. The photos will be shown in a presentation at the 2019

Spring AGM to be held in Pembroke on April 13th hosted by the Pembroke Horticultural Society.

Send in those photos!

### CLASSES

- Class 1: First Up – Early spring blooms  
– Location Canada
- Class 2: Gardens on Display – Photos of garden beds public or private – Location Open
- Class 3: Macro Close-up – Close-up of a red flower (whole or part) – Location Open
- Class 4: Monarch's Favorite – Photos of the milkweed in any season – Location Canada
- Class 5: Rainbow – Photos of a display of complimentary colours in a garden  
– Location Open
- Class 6: Reflections in Water – Your interpretation – Location Canada
- Class 7: Art in the Garden – Photos of bird houses, statues, benches or other decorative elements. Location Open
- Class 8: Holiday Décor – Outside greenery display for the holidays – Location Open

### BONUS CLASS:

- Class 9: Native plants from around the world  
– Location Open

### RULES:

1. Exhibitors must be a member in good standing of a Horticultural Society within District 2.
2. **NEW:** All photos submitted should be taken in the last two years.
3. Entries accepted in digital format only.
4. Please provide entries in .jpg format with a High Resolution (Photos should be at least 1MB or larger in size, otherwise they will not show well in the PowerPoint presentation)
5. Photos may be adjusted for lighting and colour balance or cropped but should not be enhanced by adding photo elements.
6. **NEW:** Two entries per exhibitor per class.
7. Take care to ensure photos are entered into the correct class so they do not get disqualified. Identification of entries as follows:  
RENAME your photos using the following format:  
**YourName\_ Society Name\_ ClassNumber**  
eg: karenhaddon\_  
KanataMarch\_Class1  
For Society name, please use the full name, not just initials.  
See example above.
8. Please ATTACH your file

to your email. Do not INSERT into the email message.

Please submit your entries to Karen Haddon by **March 31, 2019**. Photos can be sent by email as an attachment (one photo per email) to district2photos@gmail.com Subject line: D2 Photo Competition. Or they can be placed on a memory stick, CD or SD Card and mailed to Karen Haddon, 9 Dorey Court, Kanata, ON K2L 2V5. For return of your media (CD/DVD, memory stick or SD Card), please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Better yet, when you take that great photo, why not email it to the coordinator right away.

### NOTES:

- Photos will be projected in a slideshow format presentation at the D2 AGM.
- Prizes will be awarded at the D2 AGM in 2019.
- Prizes for each class (if merited) 1st: \$3.00, 2nd: \$2.00, 3rd: \$1.00.  
Best in Competition - \$5.00.
- Judging Points Scale: Horticultural Value 40%, Photographic Value 40% and Appearance & Impact 20%.  
The Judge's decision is final.

## Nurturing The Gardener

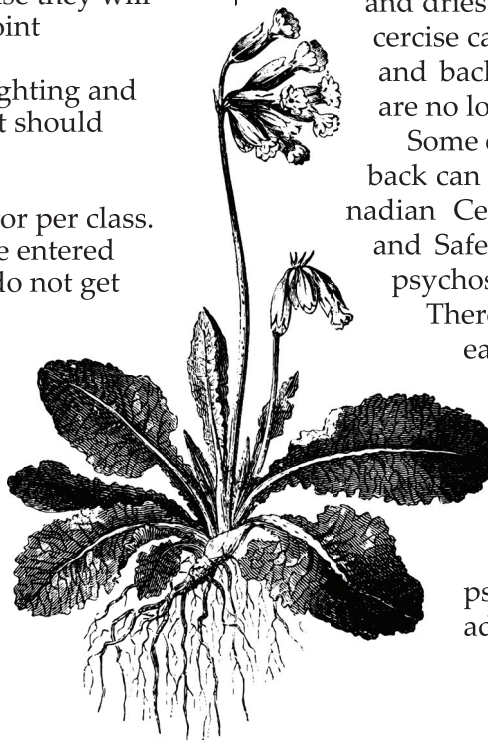
Lanark County Master Gardeners  
lanarkmg@gmail.com

No doubt is everyone is eager to plunge into the garden as soon as the ground warms up and dries out. But the unaccustomed exercise can do a number on our muscles and backs...especially since a lot of us are no longer "spring chickens."

Some excellent exercises for a healthy back can be found on the website of Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety: [www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/backexercises.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/backexercises.html)

There are 4 gentle exercises with easy and more advanced options based on research by Stuart McGill of the University of Waterloo. A second page offers some more challenging exercises:

[www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/backexercises\\_advanced.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/backexercises_advanced.html)



*There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments. - Janet Kilburn Phillips*