



NADCAA

Newton Abbot & District Co-Operative Allotment Association

NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



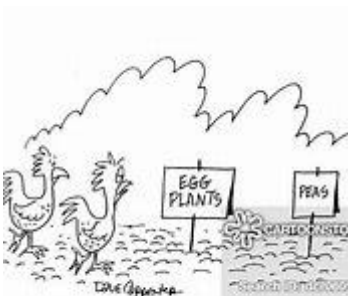
Rent. Thanks to everyone for helping us get the rents in. Unfortunately, due to the lockdown we did cancel the rent day but the majority of people who have paid did so online. At this time there are still 21% of rents outstanding. So please pay online or send your cheque payable to NADCAA Ltd to the address at the bottom of your invoice asap. Thanks to Liz and Jane for being at Decoy to help the ones that didn't get the news of the cancellation.

We appreciate how difficult it for people at this time and thank you for following the guidelines we have put in place re sanitising etc. This enables us to keep our allotments open at a time when being able to come to the allotments is a 'life saver' for a lot of people.



We are always open to people commenting on the organisation of the allotment, please let us know what you think so that we can discuss issues of concern. info@nadcaa.org.uk

Quarter plot allotments have been introduced on Decoy and other fields as it has been successful in many other allotment sites throughout the country. It gives people the amount of space to gain confidence in growing fruit and vegetables. Young families with parents who work can sometimes find it difficult having even half a plot initially, as can older people, especially if they have never done any gardening before. We want to encourage people of all abilities on our allotments.



Hope you have a chuckle at the cartoons. Hears to the end of lockdown and a brighter future. Keep safe. Meryl Basham

From the Chairman - Plastic Free Newton Abbot - We have been contacted by this organisation and asked if we would be willing to ask our members to make a pledge to give up three single use items that they buy for the allotment. When just about everything that we buy for the allotment comes in plastic containers or sacks or is made of plastic, this is not an easy pledge to make. Pots can be re-used, plastic labels can be replaced with wooden or other alternatives but after that it starts to become more difficult. We would welcome feedback from all members on this subject.

Devon Wildlife Trust - Meryl and I met with the CEO of the DWT back in January to discuss a possible partnership. Harry Barton was very impressed with the way we have encouraged all members to create bio-diversity area on their plots. He was also full of praise regarding wildlife corridors we have created or are in the process of creating. Our insect life is in need of our help and we, as an association, need to heed the warnings of the experts and stop using pesticides and herbicides. I am currently discussing the possibility of an award scheme whereby an allotment field will be issued a certificate by the DWT which will classify it as an "Insect Friendly Field". It will of course need the participation of all members to move this forward. This is something I am also pursuing in my role as Chairman of the South West Branch of the National Allotment Society. Consider the following -

A few years ago I studied for and was awarded an RHS Level 2 Certificate in Horticulture. Something I always remember from that course is that the biggest pest in the garden is the gardener. Left to its own devices a garden will create its own eco system, a system whereby pests attracted to certain plants will be predated by other insects and a balance is maintained. Introduce the gardener and he removes plants that attract the predators and he is left with the pests, then he turns to pesticides to control them. If only that gardener could be a little more patient. Scientists have just proven the following -

Imagine a cabbage being eaten by a caterpillar. The cabbage also releases a compound called glutamate which alerts the plant to release calcium ions which move across the plant at around 1mm per minute. These calcium ions tell the plant to protect itself and to switch on its defence mechanisms.

These defence mechanisms come in the form of jasmonic acid which simply make the plant taste bad and un-palatable to whatever is attacking it.

After dispensing jasmonic acid throughout the plant green leaf volatiles are produced and a smell is released. These smells allow plants to communicate with each other and warn of an impending attack and to turn on their defence mechanisms and release jasmonic acid before they are also attacked. The smell of cut grass is an example of a green leaf volatile.

Some animals have learnt that there is an association between green leaf volatiles and prey. A good example is parasitic wasps they sense the green leaf volatiles and come to prey on the caterpillars. Plants are in effect talking to animals and saying "I'm under attack, help me". Those predators respond by preying on the caterpillars and thus saving the plant. Surely this is the best argument ever for gardeners to stop using pesticides. With nature doing all of this for us we really don't need to spray everything that moves. Tim Callard (Chairman)