

Vol 3 July 2021

# BEACHMERE

## Beachmere Community

### WELCOME

Hello and thanks for reading the latest edition of the BCGI newsletter. We hope you are all making the most of the cooler weather and have some nice winter vegetables growing. A little break from the Westerly wind would be nice though!

A lot has happened since the last newsletter. We have been successful in two small grant applications, have run a successful raffle and attended our first official event. And we survived the most demanding of fund raising days...*the Bunnings Sausage Sizzle*.

But perhaps the biggest news is that we have an official home! Council has

approved the lease for our garden! You can read more about all these later in the newsletter.

It was great to be invited to a new workshop initiated by Carers Qld and MBRC where we could network with other local community gardens and gain valuable information that will help as we progress with our garden.

It's so good to see some new faces at our meetings, hopefully this continues as we increase awareness in the community as we can finally tell people where the garden is going to be.

Once again, thank you to everyone for their hard work over the last few months. Enjoy the read!

### THINGS WE NEED

#### PLANTS

Comfrey  
Pidgeon Pea  
Vetiver grass  
Indigenous food plants  
Bird and bee attractors  
(Banksias, grevilleas etc.)  
Fruit trees

#### LANDSCAPING

Large pots  
Hardwood Sleepers  
Irrigation  
Rain water tanks  
Pavers

#### PEOPLE

Media manager  
Grant application writers  
Fundraising Co-ordinator  
Recycling Co-ordinator  
Local food experts  
New members!

#### YOUR INPUT ON:

Garden design  
What will we grow?  
Policies and procedures  
Garden logo  
Newsletter name

*beachmerecommunitygarden@outlook.com*

## **It's Official!**

It is with great pleasure we can announce BCGI has an official home. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> June Moreton Bay Regional Councilors voted on the proposed lease area for the garden. In a unanimous decision it was passed to the delight (and relief) of all. Once again a big thank you to Councilor Booth for championing this project and also to all the staff at MBRC that have guided and assisted us in getting to this stage.

The moment was live streamed on the Council website and can be viewed by copying the following link into your browser.

<https://www.moretonbay.qld.gov.au/Council/Meetings/2021/23-June-2021-General-Meeting/Video-Stream>



NIKI OUT THE FRONT OF IGA WITH THE BCGI RAFFLE TABLE.

## **Raffle table at IGA Beachmere**

BCGI held their first public event, hosting a raffle table outside IGA Beachmere and promoting the garden to the local community. The morning was a great success, with a total of \$184.00 raised from ticket sales and donations. We were able to provide information about the garden although we were still unable to answer the most common question of the morning- "Where is it going to be?!" A big thank you to all members who were able to help out with special thanks to Yvonne who sat through the whole morning!

## **Festival in the Park, Beachmere 15/5/2021**

BCGI's first official event attendance was a stall at the Festival in The Park, part of Beachmere's 150 yr celebrations. The day was a great success, with more raffle tickets sold and more interested people asking, "Where is the garden going to be?". We were also greeted by Councilor Mark Booth and made introductions with State Member Ali King and Federal Member Terry Young. All members of Government expressed their support for the project which was warmly welcomed. Mr. Young also drew the raffle at the end of the day with the following people winning prizes. Laurel Fraser (Resin artwork), Beachmere Tennis Club (Topaz earrings), Deniece Mead (voucher to the Beach Shak). Thank you to all the members who donated these wonderful prizes, and to those who helped set up and attended throughout the day.

## **Bunnings Sausage Sizzle 6/6/2021**

The 6<sup>th</sup> of June can go down in the history of BCGI as the day we attempted the pinnacle of fund raising events .... *The Bunnings Sausage Sizzle*. Nerves were definitely on edge as it is well known what an institution this is. A burnt sausage could ruin our reputation within the local community! Luckily our members are made tough and we successfully finished the day with reputation intact. It was definitely an eye opener how much planning and team work is required to host the event. Overall, we raised an amazing \$1792.80, realizing a \$1207.22 profit after expenses. Well done all! A special thanks goes to Leigh from Bunnings who helped us throughout the day with the setting up and food safety requirements. Also thanks to IGA and Meat City for their generous discounts offered.

## **Community Garden Workshop 20/5/21**

Jude and David attended the first MBRC community garden workshop, held at Encircle, Redcliffe. The event was attended by some of the people we met on our garden tour (see last newsletter) as well as Sara from Carers Qld and Council Community Garden coordinator, Micah Lean. It was great to meet other members and discuss the journey each had followed establishing their community gardens and community projects. It was decided that these workshops should be held every couple of months and Beachmere was voted as the next location! We will let everyone know when this is on if you would like to attend.

## **Grant Applications**

BCGI has submitted several grant applications and we can announce that two of those submissions were successful! Below is a summary of the two grants.



### **Mobile wicking beds**

An application was made through the MBRC Local Government Community Support Grant to fund the building of 6 mobile wicking beds. These garden beds utilise the wicking concept where water is stored in a reservoir at the bottom of the bed and water wicks up through the soil (capillary action) as the plants require. They have been estimated to be 70% more water efficient than conventional garden beds.

By being mobile, they can be moved to wherever they are required during the day and then locked up in a secure (possum proof!) area at night. Thank you goes out to Bill who fabricated a prototype frame for feedback among the members (see photo). The Beachmere Men's Shed have kindly agreed to assist with the construction of the garden beds.



### **Pots, garden hose, wheelbarrow and garden tools**

A submission was made to Councilor Mark Booth's discretionary fund for these garden items. A big thank you to Councilor Booth for accepting this submission. These items will go a long way in helping with the initial set up of the garden. This is just another example of the Councilor's amazing support for our project. A thank you also goes to Tim at Collectors Corner Nursery in Ningi for the great deal he gave us on the large pots.



DAVID, STEVE, YVONNE, JUDE AND COUNCILLOR BOOTH WITH ITEMS FROM THE GRANT

We were recently advised that we were unsuccessful with our grant submission with the Alinta Energy Community Development Program for a solar set-up for the garden. Thanks to Yvonne for bringing this grant to our attention. We have also submitted a grant application to the Gambling Community Benefit Fund, which was due at the end of June. This will be for the shade sails that will be required throughout the garden. Fingers crossed!

At the General Meeting held on the 21st March, those present discussed the vision for the Garden and one of the major points that came up was the garden should be a place to assist those with disabilities. It was agreed that garden design should accommodate those with mobility and intellectual disabilities. Discussed were options such as raised gardens, appropriate access and sensory gardens. We will continue this discussion at future meetings so in the meantime, I encourage all of you to do some more research on how we can provide these types of facilities. We have already sent a few links of websites to each member's email (and will continue to send others), so please take the time to look at these and bring your recommendations to the next meeting.





## **6 Month Anniversary of Incorporation!**

Our May General Meeting marked the six month anniversary since BCGI became an official Incorporated Incorporation. Thank you to all the members for your support and hard work in that time to get to where we are today. At that meeting we discussed our achievements in that time and what we would like to achieve in the next 6 months. An outcome of the meeting was the unanimous approval of the 'Statement of Consensus'. This document helps focus the vision for the garden and will help new members get a clear understanding for the direction for BCGI and the objectives we hope to achieve.

### **Beachmere Community Garden Inc. Statement of Consensus**

As of the first six months of incorporation, the membership group has agreed on the following items in regards to the future direction of BCGI:

- The Model Rules are adopted as the associations Constitution
- BCGI Guiding Principles adopted, and adherence is required as a condition of membership
- Members will abide by all policies, procedures and codes of conduct
- The following objectives have been agreed upon:
  - A place for all people to learn and be inspired about local, healthy, ethical food production in an urban environment
  - Educate and inspire children and people of all ages to grow food
  - A community gathering place
  - An addition and improvement to local green space
  - Be guided by organic principles
  - Promote local, indigenous food plants
  - Promote methods to improve growing food in the local environment
- Three positions make up the BCGI committee- Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer
- Three membership classes available – Adult, Junior and Family
- The primary focus for BCGI is local, healthy food production.
- Members and visitors will learn and be inspired at the garden but will be encouraged to grow their own food at home
- Gardening to be based on organic principles
- Allotments for private rental will not be available. Allotments (mobile beds) will be available to community groups subject to conditions and reviews
- Accessibility, sensory garden design and disability support to be integral features
- Beachmere has difficult conditions for growing food plants including poor soil (sand). Strong, consistent winds (Salt laden South Easterly or dry Westerly) and hot, humid summers
- Weather conditions in the future are likely to be more extreme
- BCGI to take this into consideration for future decision making
- Shade structures to be provided to reduce plant stress and make gardening more comfortable
- Raised garden beds to improve soil and accessibility
- Use plants species that tolerate local conditions
- Garden beds to be mobile for multiple use of space

- Seeds saving to be encouraged
- BCGI to provide a safe, friendly garden for the community with tours run by BCGI members. Applicable local organisations will run workshops and educational opportunities.

**The next 6 months will focus on:**

- Finalising garden design
- Starting garden construction
- Further networking (community groups, local indigenous community, schools, governments and businesses)
- Construction of mobile wicking beds
- Exploring new fundraising opportunities
- Identifying local sources for seeds and plants (indigenous plants and local, established gardens)
- Gathering local gardening knowledge
- Members growing plants at home while garden is being constructed
- Encouraging young people to volunteer
- Refinement of membership classes (ie, voting, non-voting,)



# Feature Plant

While we wait the community garden to be constructed, it would be a great idea to start gathering plants that we will need. These include the plants listed on the first page of the newsletter. If you have any or know someone that has, please start growing and propagating them at your place till the time comes to take them to the garden. This month's feature plant is the Blueberry. A hardy shrub with varieties that fruit all year round, producing a slightly tart yet sweet healthy winter fruit, great for breakfast or dessert or a tasty treat straight off the bush.

(Courtesy of Frances Michaels, Green Harvest website).

**AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE:** buy or get emailed when available

**BLUEBERRY GROWING INFORMATION** © Frances Michaels

**BOTANICAL NAME:** *Vaccinium spp*

**FAMILY:** Ericaceae

**ORIGIN:** North America



## PLANT DESCRIPTION

The blueberry is a bushy deciduous shrub native to North America. It has attractive glossy green leaves that turn red to yellow in autumn. The flowers are small and pinkish-white in colour. Most varieties are self-fertile but cross-pollination will improve fruit set. Blueberries need a well-drained acidic soil (pH 4.8 - 5.2) high in organic matter. Soils may be made more acid, if necessary, by adding peat or a sulphur fertiliser to them. Irrigation is vital, blueberry plants need ample water, particularly between blossoming and fruit development. Do not plant in poorly drained soils. They do best in a sunny position but will tolerate partial shade.

## USES

The fresh fruit is delicious and it can be used for jams, pies, ice cream, cheesecake, muffins, fruit syrup and pancakes. The fruit can be dried and used like a raisin. Berries will keep in the fridge for up to a week and also freeze well.

## PLANTING DETAILS

The recommended planting time is spring in temperate areas, mid-autumn in subtropical areas so it establishes before the cooler weather. Set plant to the same depth it was in the container. Space plants 1.2 m apart. Water well in dry spells and mulch the plants annually each spring with compost. Mulching is highly beneficial to keep soil moisture even. Fertilise 1 month after planting, and then each year at bud burst.

**Pruning:** Little pruning is necessary in the first 2 years other than to shape the bush and remove dead branches. Restrict cropping; by removing flower buds, until a strong branch framework has developed, aim for a vase shape with an open centre. Fruit is produced on year-old wood. From the third year pruning is essential to maintain fruit size and quantity. Prune the bushes annually in winter; retain 4 to 6 older stems each year and encourage 1 or 2 new shoots. Please note: Blueberry 'Sunshine Blue' is semi-dwarf with a dense habit of growth and requires very little pruning.

**Harvesting:** Blueberries begin producing fruit by the third year and can continue production for up to 20 years. Pick the berries when they have turned completely blue.

**Cultivars:** 'Sunshine Blue' is a low-chill variety suitable for most climate zones; it needs only 150 hours of winter chill. It grows as an evergreen bush to 1 metre high and fruits heavily in summer. It is one of the most ornamental of the blueberries, producing pink flowers during the winter, so would make an attractive fruiting hedge. It also grows well in containers.