


**Weston Favell
Allotment
Association
Spring
Newsletter 2024**



I'm now ready for spring..
Here I am dressed and ready
for action and hanging on to my
poly tunnel!



*We had mulled wine and mince pies in
December. We had a fire pit and I tried
roasting chestnuts. (Must try harder!)*

*We were lucky to have a small break in the
wet weather. It was great to see those if you
who braved the weather and came along.*

*Thanks to Sue who arranged the food and
drink!*



Water Tanks

**The water main is turned off at present to
protect the pipes and tanks from frost. It
will stay off for the next month or so.**

In this issue.. Spring 2024 News

Notice Board

Village Show 2024

Ordering Kings Seeds

Seedy Saturday

John Innes – Make your Own

Using Peat Free Compost

Seed Potatoes and Care

Disease Control –

Blossom End Rot

Rotovating

Glyphosate

**No Bonfires from the
end of February**

**If you have a bonfire
check the wind direction
and keep the smoke
down.**

Notice Board

No Digger's and No Dig starters - Time to cover the cleared sections of your plot with cardboard (optional) and spread manure or compost to a depth of ideally 3cm (about an 1.5 inches). It's preferable to let the weather and worms have time to work on the manure before planting.

You could cover the area with ground cover once the manure is spread. This brings the insects and worms up to the surface to digest the manure.

WESTON FAVELL VILLAGE SHOW



Saturday 31st August

St Peter's Church and Church Hall
Show open 2-4 pm

Fruit and vegetables, plants and flowers, cookery,
handicrafts, photography and children's classes



***Information about
Show Classes and
Entry forms to follow.
These usually become
available in the
Summer House and
local shops in Weston
Favell nearer the time.***

Greenhouse Glass

Did your greenhouse suffer damage in the recent storms?

We have a stock of free greenhouse glass panes available and some "Z" and "W" clips. The glass panes are all the same size 61 x 61cm.

Note: If you're replacing glass panes we strongly advise you place 3 "W" clips on each side of each pane. This helps prevent storm damage.

If you need some see a committee member or visit the shop on Sunday morning.



Kings Seeds Ordering - *Still time to order your Spring Seeds.*

To Order by Post:

Complete the green order form, adding Weston Favell Allotments Association but using your home address. Don't forget to add the postage costs as shown. Kings will acknowledge your order by email.

To Order Online:

Existing online customers

Log in to <https://nsalg.kingsseeds.com/secure/login>

This brings up a login page

Don't enter any details but Go Straight to

"Change your password"

You'll then get an email from Kings where you can add a password of your choice.

Then proceed with your order. Don't forget the appropriate postage costs.

New online customers

Contact Fran on woodley11@virginmedia.com with your plot number, full name, address and email. Fran will set you up as a buyer.

Kings seeds will then contact you by email (check your spam folder) to set up a password

Then proceed with your order. Again don't forget the postage costs.

NB – the Quick Order option (at the very top of the screen) will do all the calculations for you.





Northampton's



Seedy

20  24

Saturday

**Community Seed Swap
Seed potatoes
Stalls • Café**

10 February • 10 am to 2 pm

**The Doddridge Centre
109 St James's Road (opp. Church's Shoes)
Northampton • NN5 5LD**

Scan to add this event to your calendar



**Free entry
and on-site car parking**

**Facebook: northamptonseedysaturday
www.nseedysat.epizy.com**

John Innes Seed Compost

David and I were discussing seed planting one Sunday morning and he was telling me about the ideal compost to use. Farmers and small holders plant seeds into “John Innes Seed Compost”. Now I thought this was a brand name but was corrected by David as John Innes is a “recipe” of a specific mix for planting seeds or for pricking out seedlings. Using “John Innes” improves the germination rate and growth of seeds and seedlings.

The recipes are below but note the following for best results:

- Sterilised Loam (Soil) – steam sterilising our soil isn’t an option at the allotment so place the soil on a plastic sheet or tarpaulin and cover with another plastic sheet with holes in. The soil will dry out and get warmed by the sun.
- Sieve the mix.
- The fertiliser chart below aids finding, adding or changing the nutrients if you haven’t those in the recipes. Or there are other home made alternatives you could add.
- Home made comfrey and nettle feed are good sources of potassium, some nitrogen and calcium. Grows wild around the allotment site. If you’re going to the beach collect some seaweed!
- Organic fertilisers include Hoof & Horn; bone-meal and fish, blood and bone.

Source: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/soil-composts-mulches/john-innes-compost>

Fertiliser	Nitrogen (N)	Phosphates (P)	Potash (K)
Nitrate of Chalk	15.5	0	0
Ash (Wood)	0	2-4	5-15
Bone Meal	2-4	27-30	
Compost	2-2.5	0.5-1	0.5-2
Growmore	7	7	7
Farm Manure	0.4-0.8	0.2-0.4	0.4-0.7
Fish Meal (FBB)	8-9	9-10	1
Potato Fertiliser	6	10	10
Sulphate of Ammonia	21	0	0
Poultry Manure	4-6	3-5	2-3
Osmocote	19	6	12
Fish, Blood & Bone (FBB)	5	5	6
Hoof & Horn	13	0	0
Sulphate of Potash	0	0	40
Superphosphate	0	18	0

The recipes..

John Innes Seed and Potting Compost

Base Soil Mix:

- 7 parts sterilised loam (soil)
- 3 parts peat or peat free compost
- 2 parts horticultural coarse sand (NOT builder's sand)

For Seed Compost add the following to the base mix (the fresher the sterilisation the better for germination)

To each 9 lit (2 gall) bucket of base soil mix add:

- 10g superphosphate (or bone meal or mineral phosphate)
 - 5g lime or chalk
- Sieve it

For Cuttings Compost: No Additions

For Potting Compost (John Innes no 1) add the following to the base mix:

To each 10 lit bucket full add:

- 5gm (1/4oz) ground chalk or lime
- Or add the following mix:
- 10gm Hoof & Horn (or nitrate of chalk)
 - 10gm Superphosphate (or bone meal or mineral phosphate)
 - 5gm Potash

Sources:

<https://www.proctorsnpk.com/t/HowToMakeYourOwn>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/soil-composts-mulches/john-innes-compost>

Composting Points

1. Sphagnum Moss – consider saving any moss and encouraging its growth. Maybe even grow your own and use as a growing medium. It's very expensive to buy.
2. If you use a general compost rather than a specific seed compost remember that general compost has added nutrients and seeds don't usually need them.
3. Good idea to compost old path bark chippings. They're usually well-rotted and ready to use in a compost recipe with other ingredients.

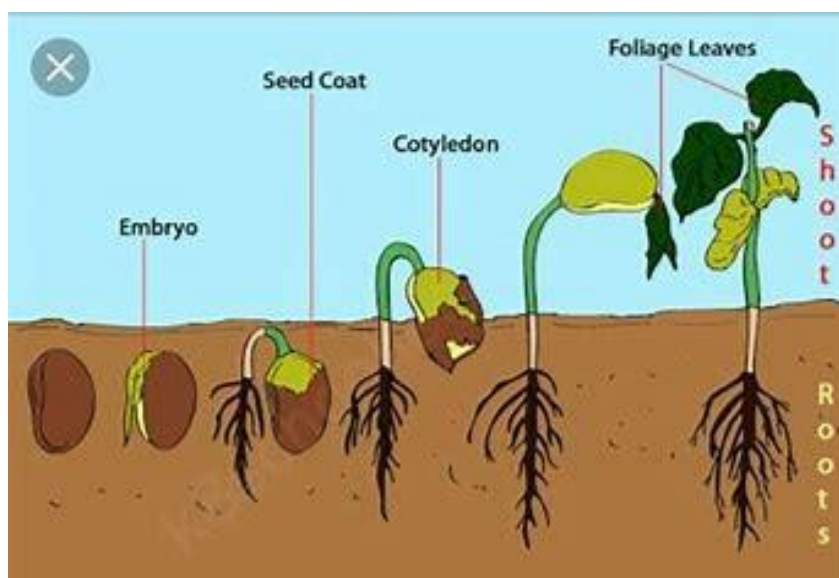
USING PEAT FREE COMPOST

I was reading an article about Peat Free Compost in the January copy of the RHS "The Garden" magazine handed to me by David. They made the following interesting statement "You can't use peat free composts in the same way as peat based compost. You have to treat them differently"

The main ingredients in peat free compost include: wood, bark, green waste and coir. Sounds like we should all be making our own!

They mentioned 12 tips on peat-free growing. Here are six I think most relevant for allotmenters:

1. Water thoughtfully - peat free compost can look dry on top while still damp underneath. This makes it easy to overwater. You need to feel under the surface or check the weight of the pot before watering. Maybe decide to water every week on a regular basis. Use a Spray gun to mist seeds regularly, don't let them dry out.
2. Feed the plants routinely. Peat free composts are very free draining so the nutrients get washed out.
3. Sieve before use – Seeds prefer fine compost.
4. Use a Spray gun to mist your seeds regularly. Don't let them dry out.
5. Get to know your compost – they're not all the same and don't all behave in the same way. Blend with other ingredients. Buy the best you can and make it go further by adding sand, grit, perlite, sieved garden soil or well-rotted garden manure depending on what you need it for.
6. Make your own from your garden compost and home compost bin. Make sure it's well rotted down. Ensure you can take the finer compost from the bottom of the bin by having an access door. I recommend letting it dry so you can sieve it.



Seed Potatoes

These are due for delivery about the 2nd week in February. We'll need to sort them out into your orders and then they'll be ready for collection. If you're free to give a hand with the delivery you'll be welcome especially if you have a van or estate car.

Once you get your potatoes it's a good idea to "chit them" before planting. This gets them off to a head start to produce an earlier crop. Lay out your seed potatoes with the eyes facing upwards. Egg boxes or trays are ideal for this. Place the trays in a cool (but not freezing) dry light place until 1-2cm shoots have formed (4-6 weeks).



Potatoes - Plant Care

Protect early sprouted foliage from frost by covering with earth or compost and continue to earth up until the ridges are about 20cm high. Weed between the rows as required. As the haulms (tops) grow they will shade out most weeds.

In dry weather, water well especially at flowering as this is when the tubers start to form. Occasional (every 10 days or so) heavy watering is preferable to frequent light watering as the latter encourages shallow rooting.

Yields

Obviously, yield is dependent on many factors, but a 3m row of earlies will yield up to 5.5kg, while a 3m row of main crop will yield up to 9kg of potatoes.



Harvesting Potatoes

As you can see from the table above, you can have your own spuds from the middle of May until your stored main crop potatoes run out. Start checking early potatoes once the flowers open; new potatoes are usually harvested when they are the size of hens' eggs.

"We can never resist cropping one or two new potato plants a wee bit early. The spuds are never very large, but they taste fabulous and there's something uplifting about the first potato harvest of a new season."

See..



<https://www.accidentalsmallholder.net/vegetables/growing/planting-growing-harvesting-potatoes/>

DISEASE CONTROL – PREVENT BLOSSOM-END ROT

Blossom-end Rot

Blossom-end rot is a serious disorder of tomato, pepper, and eggplant. Growers are distressed to notice that a dry sunken decay has developed on the blossom end (opposite the stem) of many fruit, especially the first fruit of the season. This nonparasitic disorder can be very damaging, with losses of 50% or more in some years.

Symptoms

On tomato and eggplant, blossom-end rot usually begins as a small water-soaked area at the blossom end of the fruit (Figure 1). This may appear while the fruit is green or during ripening. As the lesion develops, it enlarges, becomes sunken and turns black and leathery. In severe cases, it may completely cover the lower half of the fruit, becoming flat or concave. Secondary pathogens commonly invade the lesion, often resulting in complete destruction of the infected fruit. On peppers, the affected area appears tan, and is sometimes mistaken for sunscald, which is white. Secondary moulds often colonize the affected area, resulting in a dark brown or black appearance. Blossom end rot also occurs on the sides of the pepper fruit near the blossom end.

Cause

Blossom-end rot is not caused by a parasitic organism but is a physiologic disorder associated with a low concentration of calcium in the fruit. Calcium is required in relatively large concentrations for normal cell growth. When a rapidly growing fruit is deprived of necessary calcium, the tissues break down, leaving the characteristic dry, sunken lesion at the blossom end. Blossom-end rot is induced when demand for calcium exceeds supply. This may result from low calcium levels or high amounts of competitive cations in the soil, drought stress, or excessive soil moisture fluctuations which reduce uptake and movement of calcium into the plant, or rapid, vegetative growth due to excessive nitrogen fertilization.

Management

1. Maintain the soil pH around 6.5. Liming will supply calcium and will increase the ratio of calcium ions to other competitive ions in the soil.
2. Use nitrate nitrogen as the fertilizer nitrogen source. Ammoniacal nitrogen may increase blossom-end rot as excess ammonium ions reduce calcium uptake. Avoid over-fertilization as side dressings during early fruiting, especially with ammoniacal forms of nitrogen.
3. Avoid drought stress and wide fluctuations in soil moisture by using mulches and/or irrigation. Plants generally need about one inch of moisture per week from rain or irrigation for proper growth and development.
4. Foliar applications of calcium, which are often advocated, are of little value because of poor absorption and movement to fruit where it is needed.

Source: <https://gardenadvice.co.uk/gardening-how-to/garden-disease/blossom-end-rot/>

Rotovating

Many people, when they acquire a new plot, or come back to their plot after an absence, look at the wilderness and think that the instant answer is to rotovate.

We've had a few instances recently where the ground was too dry (hard), too wet (clay) or too many weeds. In these cases rotovating is not the answer.

On a couple of occasions the plot holders have insisted which has resulted in damage to the rotovators.

Rotovating can save a lot of digging but is only useful on clean, weed free soil. To achieve this, there are several options.

If your Plot has a lot of weeds here are the options to tackle it.

- Cover the ground with porous membrane, cardboard or any other porous, light excluding material. This will suppress the general weeds and when you remove it you will at least be able to see the pernicious weeds and dig them out.

This is a good option if the ground is dry and too hard to dig. It is also a good way of keeping some of your plot under control while you tackle other parts. Various membranes are sold in our shop – Sunday mornings 10-12.

- Hoe off the worst when the weather and surface is dry
- Digging is another option removing all the weeds and composting them. Easier when the ground is moist and soft. Tackle a small area at a time.



Hedge Bindweed

Field Bindweed



Beware!

The commonest and most persistent weeds at the Weston Favell site are twitch or couch grass, bindweed and mare's tail.

All of these have deep roots and every bit you chop with a rotovator will grow. So, if you rotovate and chop up the weeds, all you will do is create more!

Once you have you plot under control, or have cleared parts of it, then you can successfully Rotovate!



Weedkiller is another option...

but very wasteful on long grass etc. Better to cut the tall weeds down and spray when they start to grow again. Use an organic option which doesn't stay in the soil, pick a windless day and be very mindful of your neighbours.



Batting for glyphosate

Top gardeners have a dirty little secret. Many of them will tell you that they don't use herbicides. They then add in a low voice, "Of course, I used Roundup to get rid of the perennial weeds first."

On the contrary, I am proud to use glyphosate. Here are ten reasons why.

- 1 As a weed killer, it's safe to use and does no harm to wildlife.
- 2 It leaves no residues in the ground.
- 3 It is translocated in plants and 'reaches the parts others can't reach'. It does not just kill the top.
- 4 When used to clear weedy ground, all the organic matter and nutrients in the dead weeds go back into the ground. There is no wastage of organic material by burning or dumping in the dreaded wheelie bin. (Believe me, you would be horrified where it actually goes!)
- 5 Although it will take a year and more to clear a weedy plot, the actual work you do is minimal.
- 6 Often the soil structure of a weedy new plot has benefited by years of plant growth. Why destroy this structure by digging?
- 7 Gardeners who have omitted to eliminate perennial weeds such as couch, ground elder and bindweed, continue forking it out for ever more.

Batting for glyphosate... continued

8 Where there are no perennial weeds, weed control is so easy.

9 It facilitates minimum cultivation systems, which preserve soil organic matter, worms and soil life.

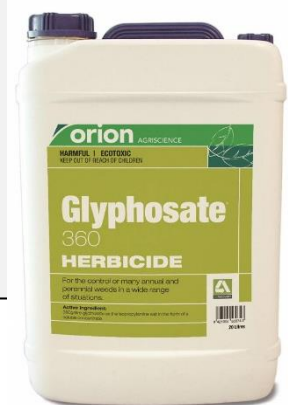
10 When used to enable zero cultivation, its effects become more interesting. You might not like the liverwort and moss, but as a habitat for wildlife at the bottom of the food chain, they are superb.



Source: Roger Brook – the No Dig Gardener website

<http://www.nodiggardener.co.uk/2012/07/batting-for-glyphosate.html>

<http://www.nodiggardener.co.uk/search?q=Batting+for+Glyphosate>



Instructions for the Use of Roundup (Glyphosate)

MAPP No. 18679 PCS No. 01669

Fast Action ROUNDUP® Ready-To-Use Weedkiller

is inactivated on contact with the soil and active ingredient is then broken down by soil micro-organisms, to allow replanting. It is a multi-purpose weedkiller that kills annual and deep rooted weeds, including:

✓ GRASSES ✓ DANDELIONS ✓ DOCKS ✓ NETTLES ✓ GROUND ELDER ✓ BINDWEED ✓ THISTLES

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

FOR USE ONLY AS A HOME GARDEN WEEDKILLER. READ ALL SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE USE.

WHEN TO USE

- For best results apply in warm, dry conditions (APR-NOV).
- Spray at any time when the weeds are actively growing and have adequate leaf area to absorb the spray.
- Rain within 6 hours of spraying reduces effectiveness and repeat treatment may be necessary.
- Apply in calm conditions to avoid drift onto cultivated plants.
- Leave weeds 7 days before digging or replanting, for the weedkiller to move to the roots.
- Maximum number of treatments: 1 per year.

Icons: Sun, APR NOV, Rain, 7 DAYS, >6 HOURS

WHERE TO USE

- For areas not intended to bear vegetation, unwanted vegetation.
- Controls most weeds around the garden, e.g. gravel areas, paths, drives, hard surfaces, patios, tarmac, along fences and for edging lawns.
- Can be used to clean up weedy ground before planting vegetables, flowers, bushes and trees, and to renovate overgrown areas.
- Do not use on lawns or other wanted plants unless you want to kill them.

Icons: Weeds, Paths, Drives, Lawns

HOW TO USE

SHAKE WELL BEFORE USE. As good practice, we recommend wearing waterproof gloves and gardening footwear.

- To refill, remove the pump mechanism by unscrewing in an anti-clockwise direction.
- Remove the tamper-evident closure on the refill pack. After use, replace the lid of the refill for the next use.
- Follow the instructions of the Pump 'N Go sprayer or those supplied by the manufacturer of your garden sprayer. Pour the required content of the refill pack into your clean, empty Pump 'N Go sprayer or a dedicated weedkiller sprayer.
- Rotate nozzle to 'spray' or 'stream'. Aim 50 cm from target weed and press white trigger. Spray to lightly wet the leaves avoiding run off. Rotate nozzle to 'stop' after use.

- Treat established perennial weeds at the start of flowering to give best results.
- Spray nettles/ground elder when new leaves have unfolded fully in late spring.
- Weeds may show first effects from a few days up to 4 weeks, depending on the weather and type of weed.
- Repeat application if necessary, should new growth appear.
- Maximum individual dose: 250 ml/7.5 m².

RESTRICTIONS

- Avoid contact by spray and spray drift with cultivated plants and desired vegetation.
- To avoid transfer to lawns and other desired vegetation, do not walk into treated areas until the product has dried.

SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

Protection during in use: KEEP OFF SKIN. DO NOT BREATHE SPRAY. WASH OFF SPLASHES IMMEDIATELY. WASH HANDS AND EXPOSED SKIN AFTER USE.

Environmental protection: Do not contaminate ponds, waterways or ditches with the product or used container. Do not empty into drains. Direct spray away from ponds and other surface water bodies. Use appropriate containment to avoid environmental contamination.

Storage and disposal: KEEP PRODUCT IN ORIGINAL CONTAINER, tightly closed in a safe place. KEEP AWAY FROM FOOD, DRINK AND ANIMAL FEEDING STUFFS. EMPTY CONTAINER COMPLETELY and dispose of safely. Do not re-use empty containers.

Poisons information: For information or to report a poisoning incident in Ireland, contact The National Poisons Information Centre (01 8092166), retain the label for reference.

RISK & SAFETY INFORMATION

TO AVOID RISKS TO HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT, COMPLY WITH THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE.

- Read carefully and follow all instructions.
- Keep out of reach of children.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke when using this product.
- If medical advice is needed, have product container or label at hand.
- For the UK only:** Dispose of contents/container to a household waste recycling centre as hazardous waste except for empty containers which can be disposed of in the dustbin. Contact your local council for details.
- For the EU only:** Dispose of contents/container to a household waste recycling centre as hazardous waste except for triple rinsed empty containers, which can be disposed of by recycling or in the dustbin. Contact your local council for details.

MAPP No. 18679 PCS No. 01669

*Active ingredient breaks down naturally in soil.

Evergreen Garden Care UK Ltd,
1 Archipelago, Lyon Way, Frimley,
Surrey, GU16 7ER, England
Telephone: +44 (0)1276 401 300
For more information visit:
www.roundupgarden.com
EU Importer
Evergreen Garden Care France SAS,
4 Allée des Séquoias,
69760 LIMONEST, FRANCE,
Tel. +353 819 882 479

Contains 7.2 g/L (0.72% w/w) of Glyphosate as a ready to use solution.

ROUNDUP® is a registered trademark and used under licence.



FIND OUT MORE ONLINE



Keep children and pets away from treated areas until spray has dried

PROTECT FROM FROST



5 Litre e



5 017676 016445 >

Committee Contacts:

Clive Leach Chairman - clivedleach@gmail.com (07970-597214);
Fran Woodley Secretary - woodley11@virginmedia.com;
Clare Herbert Treasurer - click21@hotmail.com

Members; -

David Walpole; davidbwalpole@gmail.com;
Mike Kirkland; mike.kirkland@sky.com
Sue Wray - susanmwrap@aol.com;
Carol Hill - carolehill@talk21.com;
Ed Taylor - e.taylor440@ntlworld.com;
Trevor Berry (editor) - trev.berry@icloud.com;
Deborah Cuthbertson - ms.d.cuthbertson@gmail.com

Send General Questions and Newsletter articles too-
Westonfavellallotments@gmail.com

Credit and Thanks for contributions to this Newsletter edition go to:

Frances Woodley – Content adviser and contributor;

Carol Hill – Script Writer and Advice

David Walpole– Hut Suppliers and Growing Advice

Sue Wray – Mulled Wine and Mince Pies, Events

Trevor Berry Plot 18 – Editor

If you would like to contribute to the running of the allotment,
the committee or the Newsletter get in touch:

Email: westonfavellallotments@gmail.com

