



Newsletter

# The Mercury Drops... It's February 2019

  
The Caley  
Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society

## Winter Fruit Pruning Workshop

**led by George Anderson**  
Beechgrove Garden presenter

on Sunday 24 February 2019, 2pm-4pm  
at Bridgend Allotments, Edinburgh

*(On the Old Dalkeith Road, a short distance south of the Cameron Toll roundabout)*

Numbers are limited - booking advised  
email: [rchsallotment@gmail.com](mailto:rchsallotment@gmail.com)

[www.rchs.co.uk](http://www.rchs.co.uk)

SC006522

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# Northfield Allotments To Get Water Supply... At Last

Good news to kick off the new year: Edinburgh City Council rubber-stamped the positive decision by Craigtinny and Duddingston Neighbourhood Partnership to install a water supply to Northfield allotments.

Allotment holders Heather and Phil attended the meeting on the afternoon of Thursday 31st January on behalf of all at Northfield and received confirmation that the proposal to plug the plots into the mains supply would go ahead as part of this year's environment programme.

Phil says: "Installation of the water supply has been approved and an official confirmed that advance feasibility work had also been carried out. So there's no doubt that we will be getting water installed. 'When' is the next obvious question, and we shall have to wait and see, but I'll keep in touch with the council on this. I imagine that the lead times for whichever contractor is chosen and then Scottish Water will dictate all that. As always I'll believe it when I can fill a watering can from the tap."



*This is what Northfield allotment holders were wishing for last summer. Now their dreams will come true!*

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# When You Can't Go Down To The Plot

The frost is hard on the ground. The allotment is as close to asleep as it will get. Who knows how bare the supermarket shelves will be come the spring? Isn't it good that you had the foresight to get an allotment plot? Now is the time to move closer to the fire, gather your winter clothing tightly around you and think about what to sow and reap this year.

It's important to make well informed plans and not let sowing time pass you by. As you can see from this [RHS Chart](#) one of the features of this time of year is that there's more harvesting than preparation. But now is the time to think about starting off some seeds under glass or maybe in bottom heated trays (broad beans, French beans, cauliflower, leeks, lettuce, onions, peas and tomatoes) and before long you could plant broad beans outdoors (if you haven't got them overwintering already).

This is probably the best time to take advantage of the [FEDAGA Seed Scheme](#) to help yourself to brilliant discounts on a great selection provided by Kings Seeds. **This is available to all paid-up members of FEDAGA affiliated allotment sites.**

It's also a good idea to consider companion planting to help with pest control and pollination as well as maximising the use of space and to increase productivity. Here's a handy chart to give you some ideas.



*From the Painting Scotland website.*



# COMPANION PLANTING



Plant these vegetables together to make the most use of space and deter pests.



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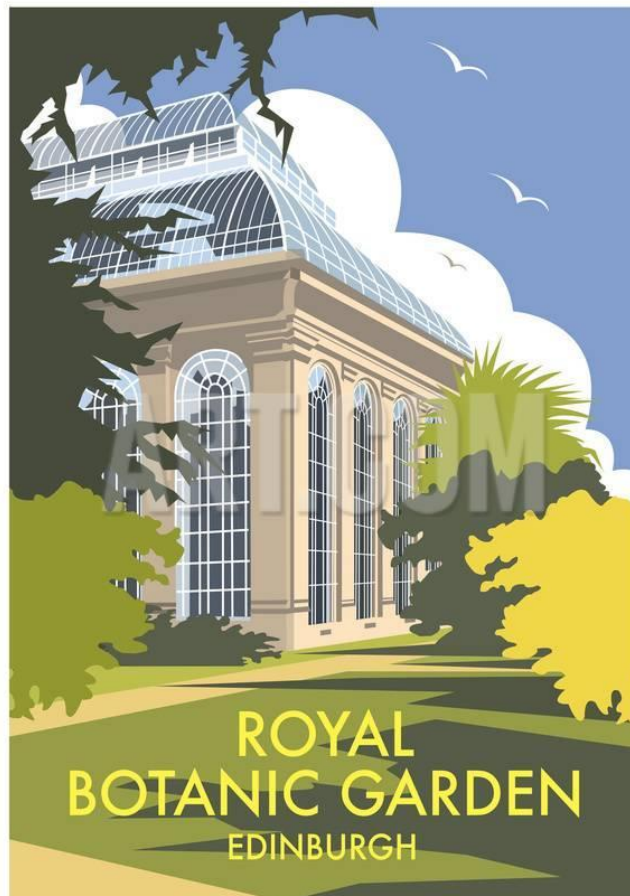
# Can We Change The Scottish Fruit Basket?

**Evening Talk: Thursday 21st February at 7pm.**

Venue: Science Buildings Lecture Theatre, 20a Inverleith Row, EH3 5LR. £7 (RBGE members: £5).

Fed up with strawberries and plums? Worried about food miles? Wondering whether you could grow goji berries or kiwis? Prof Derek Stewart of the James Hutton Institute will talk about the wide variety of seemingly exotic fruits that will in fact grow in Scotland and give some tips on how you might grow them in your own garden.

To book, ring 0131 552 5339, email [members@rbge.org.uk](mailto:members@rbge.org.uk) or pay on the door.



# Borders Organic Gardeners Potato Day and Green Fair

...is one of the biggest potato days in the country and very possibly the oldest one still running every year. Even better, it's one of the cheapest too!

This year's Potato Day is on **3rd March**. Doors open at Springwood Park, Kelso at 11am and start wrapping up at 3pm. Entry is £1.50 for adults. Children free. Free parking too!

Click [here](#) for more information.

The previous day the Dunblane Allotment Group is holding its **13th Annual Potato Day on Saturday 2nd March**, so if you'd rather head in that direction then get along to the Braeport Centre, Dunblane between 1 and 3pm. More information [here](#). Closer to home, Bridgend Potato Day is always popular but as yet we don't have any publicity. Check their [Facebook](#) page from mid February to see if anything's been posted.

To be sure of your potato (and onion and shallot) supply FEDAGA recommends members place their orders with site reps in the autumn. These will be available later in February. The Trading Secretary will be in touch with final arrangements nearer the time but we have it pencilled in for the morning of the 20th. "Bag Ends", or "what's left" will probably be available from the FEDAGA Shop in Inverleith allotments on the next couple of Sunday afternoons from 2 to 3.30pm. To be sure of last-minute arrangements and any further items of interest it's always worthwhile going to FEDAGA's [Events](#) page just to see what's come in as this is regularly updated.