



Into the Garden

The Gardeners' Club
Santa Cruz County,
California

DECEMBER 2025

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WHITE ELEPHANT

Silent Auction & Potluck Dinner



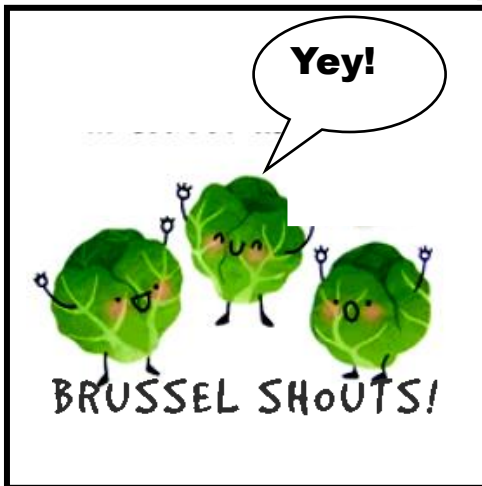
Every December our tradition is to gather to celebrate gardening, good food, good friends and the art of re-gifting. You are welcome to bring friends, spouses, significant others and family. Bring a dish to share, labeled for the benefit of members with dietary restrictions. Please bring a serving utensil, and if you share a hot dish, please bring it already warmed. We'll provide plates, utensils and drinks. No plant sale or business meeting this month.

After we feast and catch up on conversation, the liveliest part of our meeting will start. We'll browse the silent auction tables and discover items we didn't know we needed, and find perfect gifts for friends, families and ourselves. Bring unwanted oddities, jewelry, dishes, pottery, special plants, clothing, gardening items, gourmet goodies, birdfeeders, tools, chotzkes, bricabrac, vases, books, objets d'art and objets d'junk. You'll be thrilled whether you want to get rid of things or want to find bargains, gifts and treasures. No plant table this month!

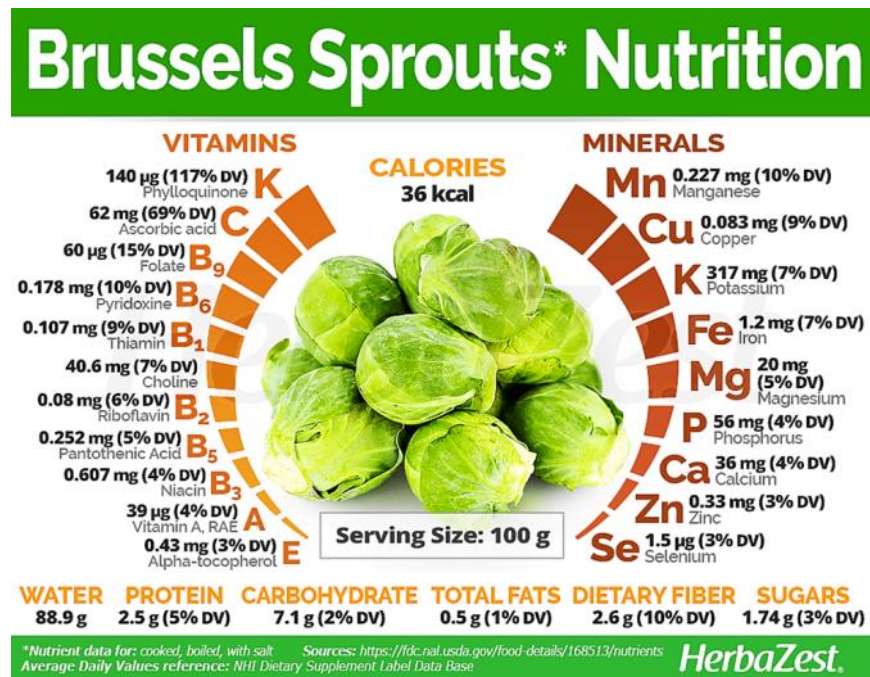
Thursday, Dec. 11th, 7:00 pm

Aptos Grange Hall, 2555 Mar Vista Dr.

celebrate Brussels Sprouts!



100 GRAMS OF BOILED, UNSALTED BRUSSELS SPROUTS PROVIDE 36 CALORIES, 5% DV OF PLANT-BASED PROTEIN, 2% DV OF COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES, AND 10% DV OF DIETARY FIBER.



Balsamic Roasted BRUSSELS SPROUTS

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. Brussels sprouts,	1/4 cup honey
6 slices uncooked bacon, cut into pieces	1 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary
3 cloves garlic, minced	1 tsp. salt
1/4 cup olive oil	1/2 tsp. pepper
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar	1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Trim the stem ends of the Brussels sprouts and cut in half from the tops down. On baking sheet, season brussels sprouts, bacon, and garlic with salt and pepper. Drizzle with oil and toss until evenly coated.
3. Bake until sprouts are tender and charred, about 30 minutes.
4. In a small saucepan, combine balsamic vinegar, honey, and rosemary. Simmer until reduced by half, stirring occasionally, for about 15 minutes.
5. Drizzle balsamic mixture over roasted sprouts and serve.

**Vegetarian option: eliminate bacon and instead garnish with parmesan cheese*

Recipe from Mangia Sta'zitto! (Shut Up and Eat!), a Brussels Sprouts cookbook written by the family that has been growing them since 1935 . Author is Suzanne Rodoni-Silverberg.

Winter Sowing

Winter sowing is an easy germination method that allows you to grow many seedlings at a low cost and with little effort. You sow the seeds in recyclable (milk jugs, liter soda bottles, etc.) during the winter. After sowing, the mini-greenhouse is placed outside to wait for the end of winter. Seeds can be started now through March and will be happy with whatever the weather throws at it, snow coverage or rainstorms. The seeds will begin to germinate in their own time as the weather warms. Winter sowing

supplies the 4 things that the seeds need to germinate: oxygen, water, light, and certain temperatures while conserving your resources. This method frees up the indoor space you would use for seed starting, reduces electricity for grow lights and heating mats, and you do not have to water frequently. Winter sowing is most successful with seeds from perennials and hardy annuals, but experiment, less hardy plants have been grown this way with great success. And there are all kinds of resources for winter sowing native plants.

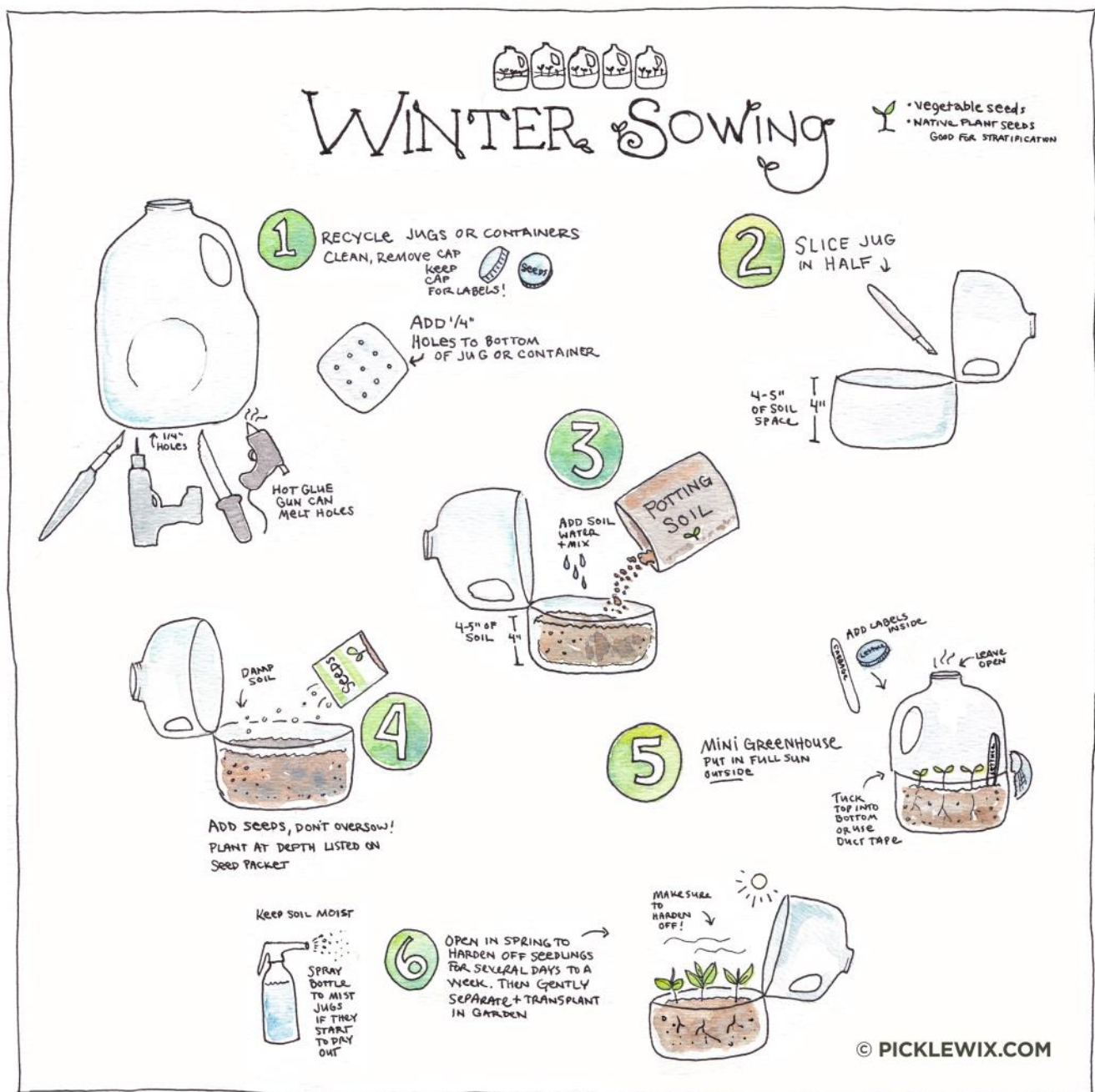
Here are a few resources for you to explore:

<https://ioegardener.com/podcast/130-winter-sowing/>

<https://awaytogarden.com/winter-sowing-of-native-plants-with-heather-mccargo-of-wild-seed-project/>

<https://ocean.njaes.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Winter-Seed-Sowing-Handout-Final-AC.pdf>

<https://wildseedproject.net/>



IF you have a garden
and a library, you
have everything you
need

---Marcus Tullius Cicero



Books! Perfect Holiday Gifts?

December is a month when many of us go into semi-dormancy, curling up with seed catalogs, reflecting on the year and what we might try differently and reading books while planning next year's garden.

Each year, the American Horticultural Society honors outstanding garden-related book published in North America. These books are evaluated on writing style, authority, accuracy, and physical quality. Each of the winners is inspirational and informative, and many remain useful, go-to guides for garden enthusiasts for years to come. Here are two of their choices this year.

Plants for the Winter Garden: Perennials, Grasses, Shrubs, and Trees To Add Interest in the Cold and Snow
Warren Leach, Timber

PLANTS for the WINTER GARDEN

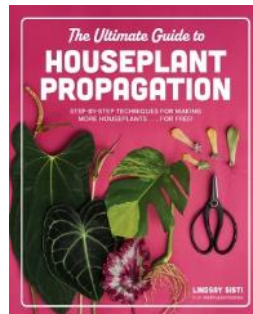


Press

This book is organized by the different attributes the plants provide in the winter landscape. That makes it helpful if you're looking for, say, a focal point accent or a particular type of plant. For the average gardener, that makes it very easy to use." Winter is often an overlooked season in the landscape, so is really exciting to read a book that has put so much thought into how beautiful the outside can look in the winter.

The Ultimate Guide to Houseplant Propagation

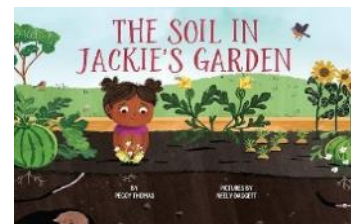
Lindsay Sisti, Cool Springs Press
Impressed by the attention to detail, the Society's committee members lauded this book's organization, accessible yet authoritative writing style, and top-notch images. "It's cool that this book is both instructional and inspirational" said Viveka Neveln. "It really makes you want to try some of this stuff. And, I will say, it is laugh-out-loud funny in some parts." Lucy Mercer agreed, noting that "the author's voice is so fresh and so funny, it really just keeps you going." She also praised



the design and layout, especially the "beautiful, crisp images." Christine Froelich said, "I was won over by the organization of it and the way the author ties everything together. I thought I knew a

lot about houseplants until I started reading this book."

The American Horticultural Society also partners with The Junior Master Gardener Program to honor engaging, inspiring works of plant, garden and ecology-themed children's literature through the "Growing Good Kids – Excellence in Children's Literature Awards" Program. Below is one of their titles. For more, go to <https://imgkids.us/bookawards/>.



By Peggy Thomas, Neely Daggett (Illustrator) Join Jackie and her garden friends in this charming picture book as they discover the wonders of gardening, soil secrets, and the magic of composting. They embrace the joys of planting a garden, nurturing and harvesting their own food, and recycling scraps to compost, ensuring that the magical cycle of growth and sustainability continues anew. Science facts about soil, plants, pollinators, decomposers, and more are included on every spread. A fantastic book to engage young readers in becoming environmental stewards, learning how to care for a garden, understanding a plant life cycle, discovering the power of pollinators and the importance of composting. Written in the cumulative style of "The House that Jack Built," this playful celebration of how things grow, return to the earth, and grow again will inspire young readers to try their hands at gardening and composting.

LATE FALL PRUNING OF PERENNIALS & SHRUBS

UC Master Gardeners and Cabrillo College Horticulture present their Home Gardener Days December session, with Peter Quintanilla, Board Certified Master Pruner and landscape pruning instructor at Cabrillo College. Class is free.

Peter will explain the basic considerations of why, how, and which of your garden's perennials and shrubs to prune in late fall/early winter.

The class will be followed by hands-on instruction and practice in Cabrillo's gardens.

**DECEMBER 13, 9:30AM
TO 11:30AM**

**CABRILLO COLLEGE
HORTICULTURE
CENTER, 6500 SOQUEL
DR., APTOS**

Made Possible By



**UC Master Gardeners
of Monterey & Santa
Cruz Counties**

FERMENTATION BASICS



**DECEMBER 14
10 AM –12:30 PM
UCSC HAY BARN,
94 RANCH VIEW
RD., S.C.
CENTER FOR
AGROECOLOGY**

Unlock the secrets of delicious, healthy, and home-crafted food at our Home Fermentation Workshop! This hands-on class dives deep into the art and science of fermentation, from understanding how beneficial microbes transform basic ingredients into delicious, healthy foods, to exploring a variety of home fermentation projects—including demonstrations of ferments like pickled vegetables and tangy yogurt. Then, roll up your sleeves for an interactive session where you'll make your own batch of sauerkraut to take home, guided step-by-step in a friendly, supportive environment. Whether you're a complete beginner or looking to expand your skills, you'll leave with newfound confidence, inspiration, and your first jar of homemade kraut ready to ferment on your kitchen counter.

Instructor Anna Lee is a lecturer in the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability. She is a Master Composter and a Master Food Preserver through UC Cooperative Extension and holds an advanced certificate in ecological horticulture from the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at UC Santa Cruz and an MS in agroecology from University of Wisconsin, Madison.

SIERRA AZUL HOLIDAY WREATH WORKSHOPS

**Saturday
December 6
11am – 1pm &
1:30pm – 3:30pm**

**Saturday
December 13
1:30pm – 3:30pm**



Instructed by Sierra Azul owner, Lisa Rosendale, each class includes all materials to make a large, beautiful, circular, holiday wreath. You will be able to choose from a variety of plant material cut from our 2-acre sculpture garden and growing grounds. These wreaths will last into the New Year!

**Cost \$50. Call to Register 831-728-2532.
2660 East Lake Ave. (Highway 152)
Watsonville**

LIFE LAB

GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN **DEC 7 1-4PM**

JOIN LIFE LAB AT THE GARDEN CLASSROOM FOR A FAMILY-FRIENDLY DAY OF NATURE-INSPIRED CRAFTS TO MAKE AND TAKE HOME!

Join Us for a Garden-Inspired Afternoon of Creative Gift-Making! Please RSVP by getting a "ticket" at <https://www.lifelab.org/events>.

Sunday, December 7th, 2025

1:00-4:00 PM

at the Life Lab Garden Classroom, on the UCSC Farm.

This event is free to attend. To support the success of this event and our programs, we invite you to make a contribution if you can.

Winter — A great time to shop bare root

According to the University of California (UC) Master Gardeners, December is the beginning of the ideal bare-root planting season for many plants in California, especially deciduous fruits, berries, and roses. Nurseries stock bare-root plants from December through March while the plants are dormant, which is the best time for transplanting.

- **Fruit and nut trees:** Common deciduous fruit trees for bare-root planting in California include apple, apricot, cherry, olive, peach, plum, and prune. It's crucial to select varieties with appropriate chill hour requirements for your specific climate zone. Best bare plants:
- **Berries:** Late in December, look for bare-root blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries, including the popular Chandler strawberry.
- **Grape vines:** You can plant bare-root grapes in California starting in late December.
- **Asparagus and artichokes:** Nurseries also begin selling bare-root crowns for vegetables like asparagus and artichokes late in the month.
- **Roses:** Bare-root roses appear in nurseries in December. Shopping early gives you the best selection of varieties.

Native plants: For mail-order native plants that you can eat, [Native Foods Nursery](https://barelyrooted.com/) suggests a variety of California native bare-root plants, including California compass-plant, golden currant, and red-flowering currant.



<https://barelyrooted.com/>



Feature	Bare Root 🌱	Potted Plant 🌿
Healthier Roots	✓ Grows faster & stronger	✗ Root-bound risk
More Affordable	✓ Lower cost, no heavy soil	✗ Higher shipping costs
Eco-Friendly	✓ No plastic pots, less waste	✗ Plastic waste & extra materials
Easier to Plant	✓ Lightweight & easy to handle	✗ Heavy & bulky
Better Adaptation	✓ Adapts quickly to new soil	✗ Shock from transplanting



It is membership renewal time! Annual dues, which include all benefits, are only \$20.00, due by January 1st. The membership year lasts through the end of December, 2026. Dues entitle members to all club educational programs, our special events, plant trades and our awesome monthly newsletter. The "green" option is to receive an electronic PDF FULL-COLOR version of the newsletter by checking the newsletter e-mail option below. And...with gift-giving season almost here, consider sharing your passion for gardening, and supporting our club, by giving your favorite gardening enthusiast an opportunity to connect, share and learn



with us. A gift membership is a gift nobody will want to return!

Ours is a club celebrating the joys of gardening, friendship, community, learning, nature and growth. We have a history of giving to the community, and have focused this giving in the last few years on scholarships for Cabrillo

College students who are working towards careers in horticulture. Because our dues are so low and we'd like to be able to continue to give scholarships as needed, we are giving you the option of making an additional gift with your membership. Thank you!

Your Membership

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

How would you like your newsletter? ☐ E-mail (FULL COLOR!!!) THE GREEN OPTION...SAVE TREES!

OR

☐ Paper (Black & white; postal service)



Gift Membership

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

Gift Membership Newsletter — Check ONE:

☐ E-mail (FULL COLOR!!!) (the green option...save trees)

OR

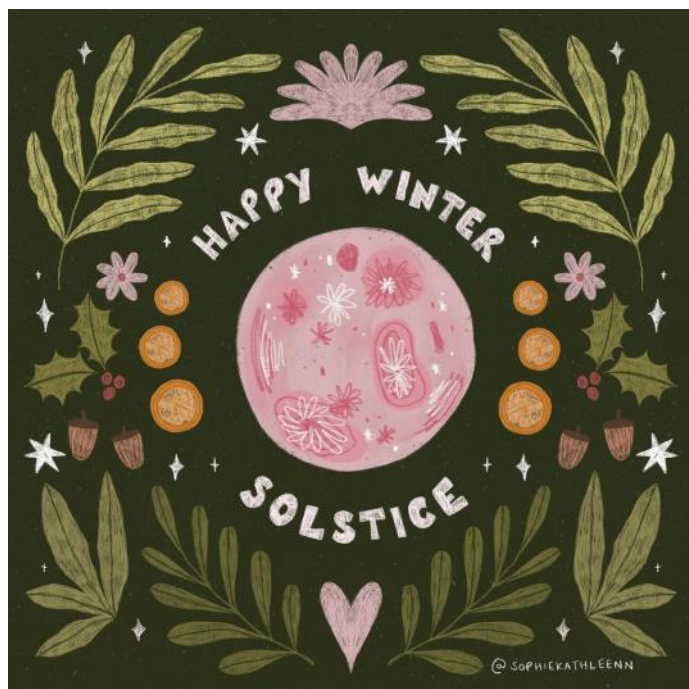
☐ Paper (Black & white; via Snail Mail)



Enclose check for \$20 per member, plus any additional contribution to our scholarship fund, made out to The Gardeners' Club. Mail to:

The Gardeners' Club c/o Suzanne Caron
P.O Box 3025
Ben Lomond, CA 95005

Membership amount	\$ _____
I would like to make an additional gift	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____



Sometimes it takes a poet like Dr. Celeste Snowber to remind us to slow down and partake of the garden's winter magic, cold, moist, dormant, quiet in its fertility.

Quiescence

Be/loved winter

what is your work in our lives?

riotous roots woven underground

reveal secrets in your hidden structure

a season of not blooming

Here is the *fruitful* dark

you teach us the necessity

of fallow time

much more is blooming

than we comprehend



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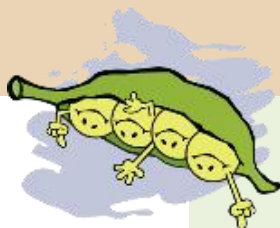
Plant Table

poppy-54@live.com

Debbie Kindle

Members-at-Large

It's easy-peasy to join our club!
Dues are \$20 per calendar year. Make check to "The Gardeners' Club" and mail to P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond, CA 95005. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Aptos Grange, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos



Our front page logo is graciously shared with us by artist Lisa Zador. Order a print or see more of her work at her Etsy shop www.etsy.com/shop/curiousprintpattern.