

## TOPIC: SEED RAISING / STRIKING CUTTINGS / PLANTING OUT

GUEST SPEAKER: **Phil Ryan**

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING: 29th August 2017

- Cuttings produce the same as the parent plant ... no guarantee with seeds
- One tray on top of the other creates a microclimate ... traps moisture ... use vermiculite Grade 3 on top tray ... holds approx 7 times its weight in moisture
- Water seeds with a very fine nozzle or spray ... finger test to check moisture
- Instead of drying tomato seeds from fruit, slice tomatoes into quarters and push into soil
- Taking cuttings - cut under a node, can leave some leaves for sunlight access if planting out
- Dip cut ends in honey - a great striking agent - gives feed and protection
- Can grow cuttings in wet newspaper ... about 6 sheets ... vermiculite mix on the paper ... water the mix ... lay cuttings into mix ... roll paper over, seal off, keep out of light
- Vermiculite mix in pots allows for drainage but also helps to retain moisture longer
- Broken polystyrene in pots also helps with drainage
- Condy's crystals weak solution can rid pots of worms and 'nasties'
- Good soil equates to good plants ... Phil's recipe for Perfect Organic Soil - 1 bag shredded cow manure, 1 bag mushroom compost, 1 bag palagonite, 1 bag vermiculite, 1 mugful Epsom salts. Wearing a mask, blend all ingredients in cement mixer/wheelbarrow ...spread over soil or rake in (don't dig in)
- Keep moisture content up to plants - use vermiculite as a mulch on top of pots, around the base of shrubs, roses etc, put in base of hole when planting out shrubs/trees
- Double potting (one pot inside another slightly larger ... with polystyrene between the bases ... creates an air pocket all around, does not use moisture as quickly, reduces heat for roots
- When planting out seedlings/cuttings, wet soil before planting .... soak seed tray/punnet in seaweed kelp ... do not touch the roots ... use a carving fork to lift small seedlings out of punnets/mix...use dibbler stick for the hole ...can add Epsom salts (quarter teaspoon) into the hole plus sea rock (product sold by Phil) plus water .... soil around and push down.
- Plants need food - liquid seaweed is beneficial but disappears quickly. Seaweed solution should be light brown ... if it is black, it has been adulterated
- Phil uses Food Grade Kelp from Canada ... Natural Kelp Co.
- If fertilising ... water first, then fertilise, then water again

Phil's tip -a mulch rich in minerals can be made from liquid amber leaves. Chop up the leaves with mower, combine 80% leaves with 20% shredded paper .... do not mulch too thickly as it will mat up ... allow for moisture to penetrate.

Phil may be contacted after dark and before 8pm on (07) 33512041 for info/appointment

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