

January 2021

Issue 13



Chairman's Chatter

Welcome to 2021 and lets all hope it brings fewer surprises than the last year.

Trading shed reopening

The trading shed will reopen on Saturday 16th January and for the first few weeks will operate on a click and collect basis to keep everyone safe during the early part of the potato sales season. We know that the first few weeks of the season can be very busy. For example, on the first day that we opened in 2020 we had five volunteers on duty to serve about thirty customers. Obviously, that is not an option this year if we are to keep volunteers and customers safe.

Your committee have made plans for selling the spuds safely and things will be a little different from previous years. Payment going forward both whilst click and collect operates and when we open for in person browsing is now by card in the shed. There are full details inside however be rest assured:

- * The potatoes will be the same good value as previous years
- * Whilst most customers want 1KG or 3 KGs of a variety, we are very flexible – the smallest quantity we can sell is a single spud of any variety – and we did do that for at least one customer last year
- * We have ordered the best part of half a ton of seed potatoes and believe we will have enough for everyone.

We will open extended hours at the start of the season to make sure everyone can get their spuds. Once things quieten down, we can, government restrictions permitting, revert to the way of operating in September and October where we allow one household in the shed at a time and people can just turn up and browse the shelves.

A big thank you

Thank you to all our members for accommodating the several changes we had to make in 2020 to keep the trading shed Covid safe. Limiting access to one household at a time, installing a screen and moving to only taking card payments as well as for several months running with click and collect rather than being able to browse the shelves have changed the way you visit us.

Thank you also to all the volunteers that make the shed possible – they have had to learn new ways of serving you and without them, there would be no shed.

2021 membership fees are now due, unless you already have a 2021 membership card, you can pay with your first purchase of the season and we remain the best value membership in the area – still £1.50.

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Seasonal Tips—January/February

January

Harvest hardy winter varieties of cabbages, cauliflowers and other brassicas, plus leeks, celeriac and root vegetables such as parsnips, swedes and winter radishes

Spread well rotted manure or compost over empty beds

Buy and start to chit seed potatoes

Sow or plant in January

Broad beans - as long as the ground is not frozen sow broad beans, otherwise sow in pots and keep under cover until spring.

Onions and Leeks - to give them the longest possible growing season sow seeds in modules and keep indoors at a temperature of at least 10C. Transplant outdoors in March or April

Peas - for a very early crop, sow seeds in pots under glass and harden off to plant outdoors in March or April

February

Harvest cabbages, cauliflowers, brussels sprouts and kale along with leeks, celeriac, parsnips and swede for warming winter stews

Sow seeds indoors to raise seedlings for planting out in spring

Plant shallots and garlic

Chit seed potatoes, make sure you have purchased all the seed potatoes you need by the end of this month

Force rhubarb, covering crowns should stimulate them into producing an early crop

Sow or plant in February

Broad beans - sow directly outside

Spinach - for an early crop in April or May sow a fast growing variety indoors and plant out in March

Tomatoes and Cucumbers - sow seeds indoors now, to ensure germination use a heated propagator then maintain the temperature at a minimum of 21C

Cookery Corner - Sweet potato, chickpea & spinach curry courtesy of Jamie Oliver

This is a cheap and easy vegetarian dish. You could add chopped cauliflower, red pepper or aubergine before the sweet potato; throw in shredded cooked chicken with the tomatoes; add raw prawns or white fish pieces 5 minutes before the end of the cooking time. Serves 6

Ingredients

- * olive oil
- * 2 red onions
- * 3 tablespoons rogan josh paste
- * 1 fresh red chilli
- * 3cm piece of ginger
- * 1 bunch of fresh coriander
- * 3 sweet potatoes
- * 1 x 400 g tin chickpeas
- * 8 ripe tomatoes or 1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- * 1 x 400 ml tin light coconut milk
- * 400 g pre-washed spinach

Method

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat.
2. Peel, finely slice and add the onion along with the curry paste, mix well, then cook for 10 minutes, or until the onion is soft and golden, stirring occasionally.
3. Finely chop the chilli, then peel and finely grate the ginger. Pick the coriander leaves and finely slice the stalks. Chop the sweet potatoes into 2cm chunks.
4. Add the chilli, ginger, coriander stalks and sweet potato to the softened onion. Drain and tip in the chickpeas, then cook for 5 minutes.
5. Roughly chop and add the fresh tomatoes (if using) or tip in the tinned tomatoes. Add 200ml of water and bring to the boil.
6. Reduce the heat to a simmer, then cover and cook for 10 to 15 minutes.
7. Remove the lid, then cook for a further 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until the sweet potato is cooked through and the sauce thickened.
8. Stir in the coconut milk and cook for a couple of minutes, then stir in the spinach and cook until wilted.
9. Scatter over the coriander leaves, serve with poppadoms and rice, if you like.

Trading Shed

Spring planting Potatoes, onions, shallots, peas and garlic

Our usual great value potatoes, onions, shallots, peas and garlic will be available to buy, initially through click and collect to keep everyone safe. As soon as we can, and the government rules allow we will revert to a shop where you can come and browse our stock

Potatoes: 1kg - £1.00 3kg - £2.20		
Type	Variety	Characteristics
1st Earlies	Arran Pilot	White skin colour. Very Early. Good Flavour. Boil well. Bake well.
	Foremost	Russet skin colour. Good scab resistance. Boil well. Bake well.
	Premiere	High yielding. Yellow flesh. Good blight resistance. Good taste.
Salad	Charlotte	Reliable, high yielding. Waxy long light-yellow tubers. Good flavour. Boil well.
	Pink Fir Apple	Long knobbly pink tubers. Cooked whole – delicious hot or cold.
Main Crop	Desiree	Red skin colour. Fairly waxy. High Yield. Drought resistant. Boil well. Bake well. Roast well. Chips well. Mashers well.
	King Edward	Part red skin colouration. Good flavour. Boil well. Bake well. Roast well. Chip well. Mashers well.
	Maris Piper	Uniform in shape and size. Good yield. Good flavour. Boil well. Good chipper. Bake well. Roast well. Chips well. Mashers well.
	Picasso	Stunning red eyes. Massive yields. Mild taste. Stores well. Some resistance to blight. Boil well. Bake well. Roast well.
	Sarpo Mira	High resistance to blight. Good boiler. Bake well. Mash well. Good in salads.

Onion Sets 300g - £0.80		
Type	Variety	Characteristics
	Stuttgarter Giant	A flat shaped yellow skinned set with good yield and keeping properties. Plant in February. RHS Award of Garden Merit.
	Turbo Spring	A globe shaped golden yellow skin set with good yield and keeping properties. Slow to bolt and strong grower.
	Sturon	A round straw-coloured onion which stores well. High yields of medium sized onions. Plant in February to April. RHS Award of Garden Merit.
	Red Baron	A red skinned flat-round onion. Good in salads. Plant later. RHS Award of Garden Merit.
Shallots 300g - £1.00		
	Yellow Moon	Disease resistant. Stores well and good for salads. Stores well.
	Golden Gourmet	Yellow with a mild flavour. Good for pickling and can be planted from February onward. RHS Award of Garden Merit.
	Pikant Red	Red skinned and resistant to bolting. Matures early and stores well.

Garlic £1 per bulb		
	Cledor	Soft-neck. An improvement on an old French variety 'Rose du Var'. Produces round white bulbs with strong skin and great flavour. Harvest late Jun- Aug
	Flavor	Hard-neck. An Italian pink type, produced in France, that matures late July. Store well once opened.
	Picardy Wight	Traditionally smoked in France due to its longevity. It will keep to May the following year.

Trading Shed (contd.)

Elephant Garlic £1.65 per Clove		
Garlic	Variety	Characteristics
	Elephant	Elephant Garlic cloves produces big bulbs and big fat cloves. You grow it just like you would any regular garlic. Each clove at planting turns to around 4 cloves at harvesting.

Beans 125g - £0.80		
Type	Variety	Characteristics
Beans	Enorma Runner	Short-jointed plants producing an enormous crop of very long, smooth, slender beans of excellent shape and colour. RHS Award of Garden Merit winner.
	Masterpiece Long Pod Broad Bean	Excellent length of pod and table quality. A fine green seeded broad bean and excellent for deep freezing. RHS Award of Garden Merit winner.
	Aqua Dulce Broad Bean	A long podded, white-seeded tasty board bean that's early to mature. Recommended for autumn and winter sowings throughout the UK for the earliest crops the following spring and summer.
Peas 125g - £0.60		
Peas	Kelvedon Wonder	Thin-shelled pointed, narrow pods in pairs. Heavy yielding and of fine flavour. It is also resistant to mildew and suitable for March-July sowing. RHS Award of Garden Merit winner. Early variety

Compost. Fertilisers and John Innes

Taking advantage of the second lock down in November we had a big tidy up and now have more storage space meaning that Compost. Fertilisers and John Innes (seed, 1, 2, & 3) are all in stock during January and available for you to buy, even while the spuds are on display. We also have the blended stable manure bags in stock and available – a popular new line introduced in 2020.

AGM

Apologies that there was no H&P AGM in 2020. It was due to happen about five days before the start of the initial lockdown and we agreed to postpone it. Since then, things have been too busy running the shed to have an AGM.

The committee have set a date for the 2021 AGM and this will happen on Wednesday 17th March 2021 starting at 19:30. Depending on what is happening in March, the AGM might be in person or by zoom – but it will happen.

Mick the Manure man

This is a popular time of year to top up the organic matter in your soil which is often achieved by adding well-rotted manure. A source we have used for a couple of years now is Mick whose mobile number is 07769 876908.

Mick is based in the Hurst area and he is happy to deliver a load of between three and four tonnes for £40 – an increased price but still very good value. If you only have half a plot, then many people share a load to

Culver Lane Best Plot

Due to Covid 19 this year's competition had to be judged by Roger and Julia – both previous winners.

Best plot Winner: John Laws Plot 64

Runner up: Pietro Cassano Plot 29

Most improved plot Joint winners: Ajit & Mukhtiar Kahlon plot 71 and Mohinder Singh Chhokkar plot 71a

Many thanks to all plot holders for their efforts this year