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## INDUCTION FOR NEW MEMBERS TAROONA NEIGHBOURHOOD GARDEN

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Welcome to the Tarooona Neighbourhood Garden (TNG). We are pleased that you are choosing to garden with us and hope you will enjoy meeting and working with our 50 plus member families.

A member will walk you around the garden, explaining how it works and pointing out the different facilities.

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### COMPOST BAYS

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One or two bays will have compost ready for you to dig into your garden bed. If TNG has funds, compost is free. Sometimes there is a charge. Look for the signs. Compost and other supplies are for onsite use only, not for take-away. One bay holds sand for you to dig into your plot (ie if soil is too clayey).

The top corner bays are reserved for our own compost making, and will be filling with green garden waste. Please chop up spent crops and weeds (ideally into 5 cm lengths) before adding them to the bay. The compost crew will manufacture compost from the chopped garden waste, and TNG supplements that as required with purchased compost.

Please separate twitch (the grass with long ropey roots) and place it in the bins above the shed. It will be removed from the garden as to compost it will result in further invasion of this difficult to remove pest.

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### SHED

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Please use the tools in the shed and replace after use on hangers or against wall to minimize tripping hazards.

Other supplies in the shed are for member use – eg seed bank, bags, pots, some organic pest control substances.

Please do not leave any dangerous or flammable substances in the shed.

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### INNER PERIMETER BEDS

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Fruit trees are planted around the perimeter, but there is quite a bit of space between them where other crops can be grown. If you would like to plant in a neglected/empty section, please work up the soil and do so. Make sure you place a sign with your name to indicate you are using the space, so no other member takes it. When you no longer wish to work the space remove the sign. You could also use these spaces for excess seeds and seedlings. Please label all planting appropriately.

Do not cultivate or plant within half a metre of fruit tree stems to avoid root damage.

Fruit trees have been adopted by some members, and they will care for their adoptees.

Crops grown on the inner perimeter are to be shared with all of the garden members, so when they are ready to harvest, place the green harvest-now flag in the plot.

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### COMMUNITY BEDS

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Two long community beds are divided into 4 sections for crop rotation. These will be planted according to a crop rotation plan. Crop rotation is about planting groups of similar vegetables together in a different part of the garden each year, to minimize build up of pests and diseases. These beds will be planted in four different sections, as marked with signs. There will be a working bee from time to time to plant these sections.

**The four groups of vegetables for planting out sections are:**

1. Sweet corn and cucurbits (pumpkin/zucchini/cucumber tribe)
2. Alliums and root crops (onion tribe, carrots, beets, parsnips etc)
3. Brassicas and legumes (cabbage tribe and pea/bean tribe)
4. Solanums (tomatoes, capsicum, chillies, eggplant)

The rotational plots will be planted out by members at advertised workshop sessions.

Members are invited to weed and water as the need becomes apparent. It may be necessary to roster members when required.

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## WORM FARMS

These are kept to provide some vermiculture-compost for TNG plots. It takes many months for each bin to fill and mature. Several local people add their kitchen scraps to the active bin, and small amounts of well chopped garden waste can also be added from time to time also. There are two bins near the side gate, and a tub worm farm above the shed. Look for signs to see which one is active and accepting worm food.

If you would like to add your household scraps, please make sure everything is well chopped. Do not add bread or anything that is mouldy, and only small amounts of citrus and onions please. Avocado pips and sweet corn husks take too long to break down so should not be added.

When indicated by a sign you can harvest ready worm compost. If digging it into your plot, lift the lid on the bin for 20-30 minutes before you take it to allow the worms to descend. You will inevitably get some of the compost worms in your plot, so wait a few days before planting as the birds will disturb the soil until they have taken the worms.

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## GREEN HOUSE

The greenhouse is for use of all members. If you would like to have a space, put your name on the label on a vacant spot. Seedlings and cuttings in the plastic house will need to be watered every day as they dry out quite quickly.

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## HERB GARDEN

Everyone including the general community is invited to pick herbs from the herb garden outside the perimeter fence.

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## COMMUNICATION

News is posted on our website (<http://taroonatastas.au/tng>) and on notice boards inside and outside the shed. Please check regularly.

The committee also sends out regular emails with news about TNG. Please feel free to use the notice boards for garden related messages.

Any other communication to you from TNG will usually be by email You will be invited to join our email group. Please let a committee member know if your email address changes, or email [tng@taroonatastas.au](mailto:tng@taroonatastas.au).

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## WHO CAN HARVEST?

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Members are invited to take ready vegetables from the community plots or perimeter beds when they are marked with a green **harvest-now** flag, please leave a small donation in the box attached to the outer wall of the shed.

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## WATER

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Water is reticulated to five taps around the garden. There are 'gate switches' on the tap by the side gate (ie on the street side of the garden). If water appears to be turned off at your tap, you may need to turn it on at the gate switch. The switches operate so that water is either turned on to the tap at the street gate and off to all other taps, or is off at the street gate tap and on to all others.

DO NOT WASTE WATER. Do the finger test. Do not water foliage in the heat of the day as it will burn the plants. Watering in early morning or evening is best. Make sure to turn off taps tightly.

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## A FEW RULES

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1. Cover the children's sand pit after use to keep animals out
2. Keep the gates shut and if you have to bring a dog into the garden, keep it on a leash and off the vegetable plots.
3. After using hoses, turn the water off at the tap tightly and rewind the hose around the tap stand.
4. Do not waste water. Before watering, do the 'finger test' – poke a finger into the soil and if it is moist under the top 10 mm, you do not need to water.
5. We are an organic garden. Please do not use poisons. A suggested list of controls is on our website.

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## MEMBER OBLIGATIONS

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In order to keep the garden thriving and producing, we ask each plot holder to contribute a minimum of 5-6 hours labour per year on general tasks (mowing, compost making and weeding etc). You can make your contribution at working bees which are held from time to time (usually on a Sunday afternoon) or just do a task as you see it and at a time that suits you. Occasionally suggested tasks will be posted on the notice board.

We also have occasional social gatherings and informative workshops. Plenty of notice of these will be given in posters on the shed and in email newsletters.

Memberships become due in January. The treasurer will send you an email a notice about how to pay.

We do not have a strict structure and welcome member participation in all aspects of the garden's activities. If you have knowledge or skill in any suitable area, please tell a member of the committee. We would love you to share your expertise through workshops, working bees or by taking on tasks and maintenance around the garden.

All members are also invited to attend committee meetings. These will be advertised on the shed notice boards and on our website.