



Garden Diary - 4th June 2020

Food going to good places...

This was the first week that our harvest felt substantial. Getting through the months of April and May, where things are at the early stages of growth and best left alone, to get to June, where our baskets are leaving the garden full!

The sweetest broad beans are ready in the polytunnels and we are bagging up dozens of crisp mixed salad bags and the first few punnets of strawberries have gone down to Colebrooke House.

I think harvest will always be one of my favourite things we do here in the garden. It's when all that time and attention pays off and the reward is delicious fruit and vegetables.

Over the years we have built a steady group of customers and I have got to know many of them personally. Each Wednesday they will come to the garden to collect their vegetables and it's great if we get a chance to chat about all the delicious recipes they have planned. Seeing customers with big smiles on their faces when they take home their produce is a great feeling. I like thinking about all these tasty meals being cooked up in kitchens all around Fermanagh.

Having more of a connection with our food definitely adds to the experience of cooking and eating it. When you have grown something yourself; spent the time weeding, watering and protecting it from slugs. When it comes to harvesting and bringing it to the kitchen your going to appreciate the way it tastes so much more. On my menu tonight is Pasta Carbonara with broad beans and asparagus, can't wait!

*Regards, Dougal Dorman, Head Gardener,
Colebrooke Walled Garden*



HARVEST HIGHLIGHTS

4TH JUNE 2020

Broad Beans, Lettuce and Garlic

BROAD BEANS

Broad Beans have filled their pods nicely and we have been getting good quantity for the last couple of weeks now. They will keep producing as long as we keep picking!



GARLIC

Garlic we planted in Autumn in the tunnels got pulled up this week and is now drying before we braid them together.

GREAT SALAD

We grow salads most of year. Our favourite varieties of lettuce are:

- Lollo Rossa
- Navara
- Mazur.

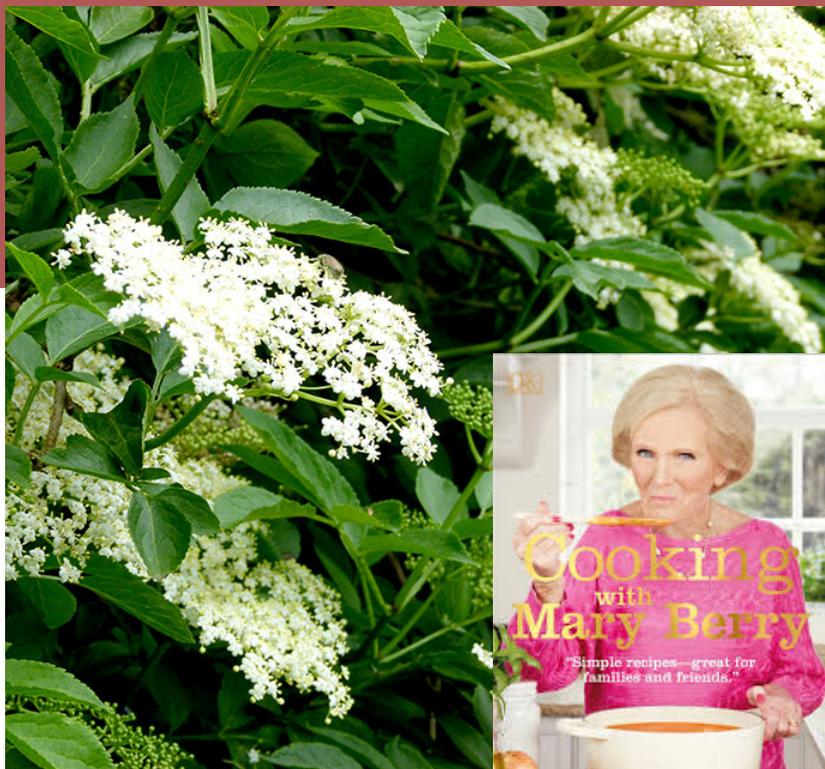
They make a great, tasty mix. For colour we also added edible flowers such as Nasturtiums, Borage and Calendula.



If you're interested you can buy our produce from O'Doherty's Butchers in Enniskillen.

ELDERFLOWER CORDIAL

6TH JUNE 2020



Elderflower blossoms are starting to pop up all over the country! Whilst this cordial is a little long-winded to make, it is very simple and has a delicious, zangy, summery taste. I like Mary Berry's recipe as it isn't too sweet. It includes citric acid, which you will find in large supermarkets, pharmacy's or can be ordered online.

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5kg Caster Sugar
- 2 Lemons
- Approx. 25 heads of elderflower
- 50g of Citric Acid
- Optional: 2 Campden Tablets*

NOTE

If using Campden tablets, add alongside the Citric Acid. Campden tablets produce an irritant gas if inhaled. Keep your face well back from the mixture when adding. Campden tablets are a sterilizer and should be used depending on where you source your elderflower i.e. roadsides etc.

METHOD

- Put the sugar and 1.5 litre water into a large pan. Bring to the boil, stirring, until the sugar has dissolved. Remove from the heat and cool.
- Slice the lemons thinly. Put into a large plastic box or a bucket. Add the elderflower heads to the lemons with the citric acid.
- Pour over the cooled sugar syrup. Cover and leave overnight or up to a couple of days.
- Sieve and strain through muslin into sterilised bottles and store in the fridge.
- To serve, dilute to taste with still or sparkling water.

Elderflower heads can be frozen, so pick now to allow for delicious elderflower cordial year round!

