

Garden Diary 26th June 2020

Veteran's Market Stall

This week a few of us in the garden started plotting to set up a Colebrooke Veterans Market stall. The fact that around twenty spring cabbages were all ready at once might have had something to do with it. There wasn't much time to set it up and we didn't get to tell many people because of the lock down but despite all this it was a lot of fun to organise. One of the picnic tables got turned into the stall and our big harvest boxes started to fill up with cabbages, beetroot, garlic, carrots and salad bags. In the setting of the garden, beside the pizza oven it all did look the part.

We were not holding up too much hope to sell out but it did feel like a useful trial run. Some friends and family turn up and were keen to support us. What was great to see was just how enthusiastic everyone was to be around the vegetables they have growing, explaining to people all things we have done so far.

The ideal scenario will be to have a produce morning with our market stall in the garden every fortnight. This will give everyone a chance to buy produce and go on some nature walks around the estate. This is what we have imagined the garden should be about, people growing, socialising and connecting with nature. This market stall fits that vision so well and all seems to be coming together naturally with all our volunteers behind it all.

Hope to see you on Thursday 9th July for our first one!

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



CUTTING SIDESHOOOTS

25TH JUNE 2020

Encouraging
tomatoes to grow tall
and produce fruit

Tomatoes, if left to their own devices will grow into a large, unruly bush. Instead of this we want to encourage the plant to grow like a vine, putting most of its energy into producing lots of fruit, not just lots of green foliage.



Each week, I'll check between the stems and leaves of each tomato plant for side shoots, pinching them out when I find them. If they get really big, I will use a sharp knife to cut them off.

Also, I will cut off a couple of the bottom leaves of each plant to allow more air to flow around them. This will help stop the spread of disease and allow more sunlight to get to the fruit to ripen them.

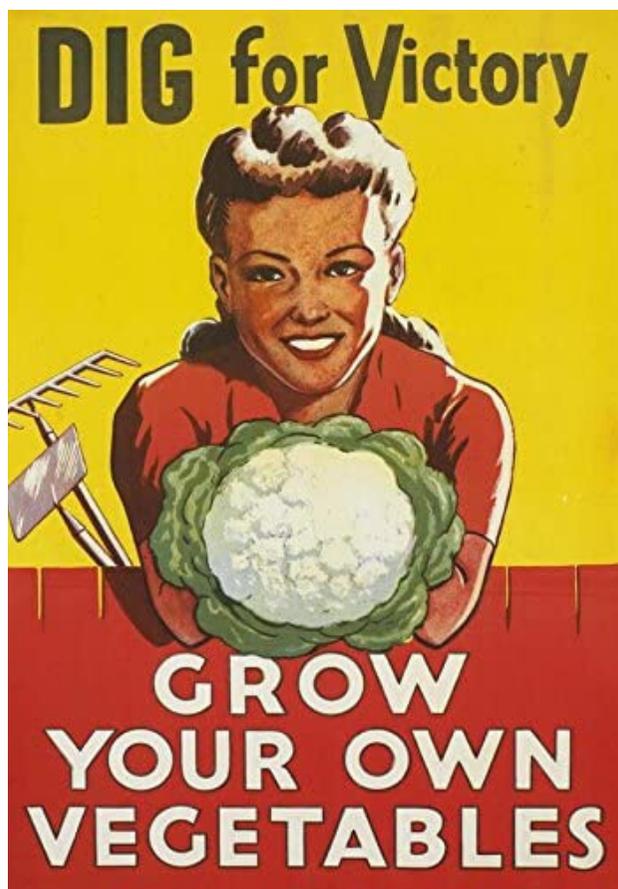
This, combined with regular feeding, as featured in last weeks blog, helps grow tasty, healthy tomatoes.

THE POWER OF ALLOTMENT GARDENING

At Colebrooke Walled Garden we share plots (or allotments) with a variety of different volunteers and veterans, to produce a wide range of vegetables, fruits, and herbs. This style of gardening has been on the go for hundreds of years.



The allotment we know and think of today when we hear the word, was truly established during the First World War. During Germany's blockade caused food shortages which increased demand on allotments and the need to produce food at home. The growing style of using small parcels of land, which were not suitable for general agricultural use was born and spread widely across Britain, however once the war was over the demand for allotment growing decreased.



The arrival of the Second World War saw Britain blockaded once again, and food shortages widespread. The famous 'Dig for Victory' campaign was launched and encouraged the public to grow their own produce. Once again allotments were critical to keeping food on British plates, with even some public parks being turned into allotments. According to A Brief History of Allotments in the UK it is estimated that 1.3 million tonnes of produce was contributed from 1.4 million plots in Britain in 1943.

Nowadays, while allotments are not as popular as they were at their peak during the Second World War, they are still a common site across the country.

Not only do they provide tasty produce throughout the year, they are often community run, providing some social outlets and good craic as well! There is a First World War Allotment Plot at Colebrooke Walled Garden.

Our own veteran plots within the Walled Garden are producing lots of tasty fruit and vegetables, and on Thursday 9th July we are having a Veteran Produce Morning! Contact Dougal via dougaldorman@hotmail.co.uk if you are interested.