Grow • Cook Share & Relish

Spring! 2026

www.growarow.org

SPRING IS SPRINGING ACROSS CANADA

(maybe sooner in some regions than others … but we are on our way!)

So … it's a PERFECT TIME to announce the availability of our Annual Free Veggie & Herb Seeds!

Whether it's for your own veggie garden or for your community garden happenings, let us know if you would like some free veggie & herb seed packets! With special thanks to the much-cherished support of Scotts Canada, our ongoing partnership with Communities in Bloom and the stamping & packaging of all the seed packages during their own personal time by the team at the Compost Council of Canada …. we are ready to fulfil your orders. All we ask is for everyone to have a great veggie gardening season and to remember to share some of your harvest with those in need (and if you could also remember to send us a photo or two of your garden patch with you and/or your fellow gardeners, we would be super grateful … it gives us joy!). =)

We have a limited quantity so don't delay. Please send an email to Danielle at **info@compost.org**, providing your mailing address along with the quantity needed (personal use or community garden use, up to 100 packets).

And don't forget – we have our third & final in this year's series of FREE gardening webinars … this coming Wednesday! Please sign up (for FREE) and join us!

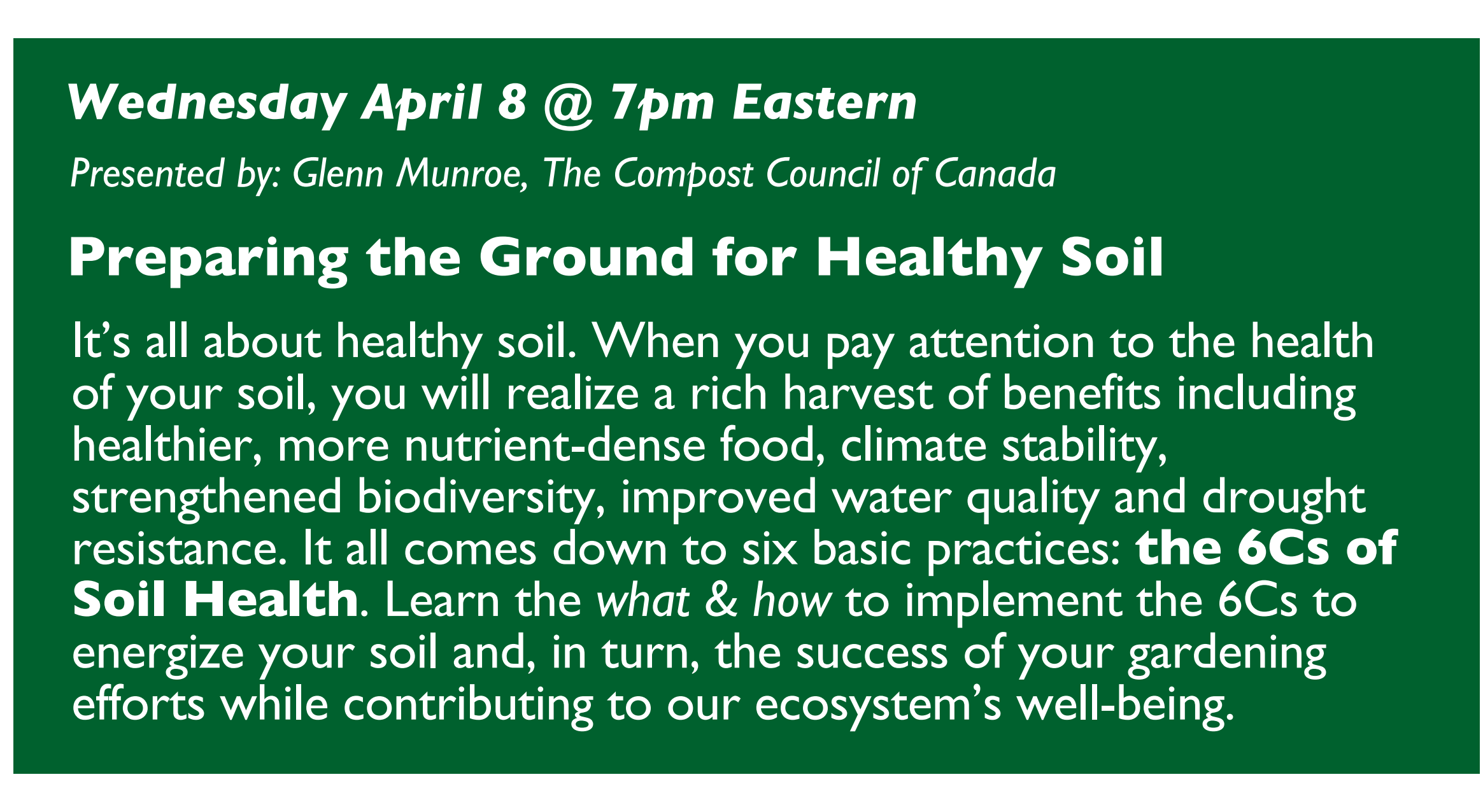
Food Gardening Matters

Wednesday April 8 @ 7pm Eastern

Presented by: Glenn Munroe, The Compost Council of Canada

Preparing the Ground for Healthy Soil

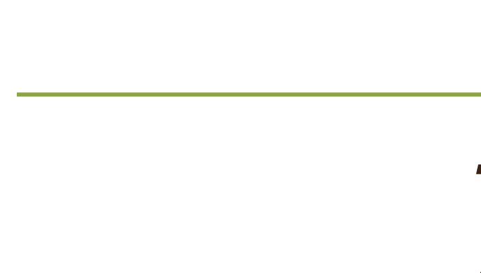
It's all about healthy soil. When you pay attention to the health of your soil, you will realize a rich harvest of benefits including healthier, more nutrient-dense food, climate stability, strengthened biodiversity, improved water quality and drought resistance. It all comes down to six basic practices: **the 6Cs of Soil Health**. Learn the *what* & *how* to implement the 6Cs to energize your soil and, in turn, the success of your gardening efforts while contributing to our ecosystem's well-being.



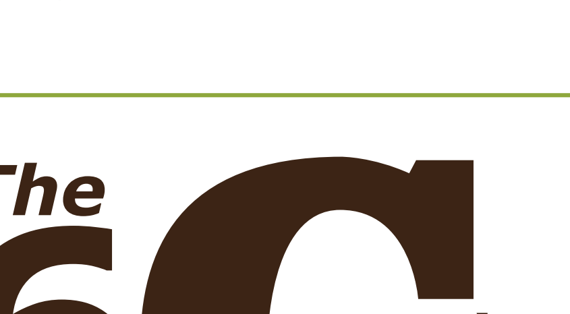
REGISTER HERE !

The 6C's for Healthy Soil

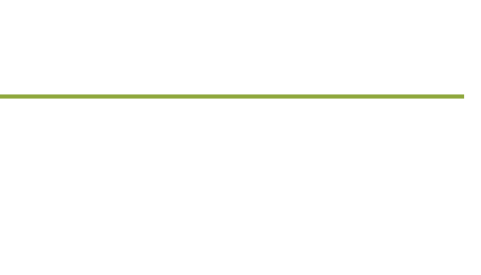
Click on the images to see larger versions



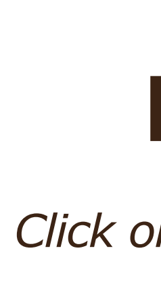
Control Compaction … one of the 6Cs for Healthy Soil



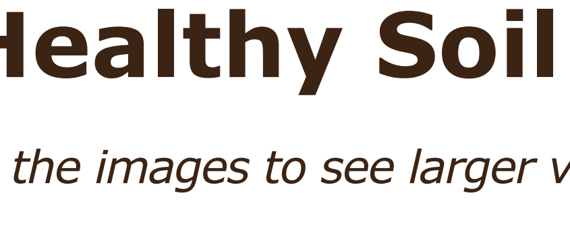
Cultivate Carefully … one of the 6Cs for Healthy Soil



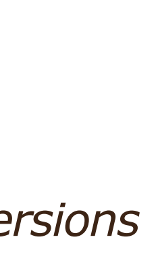
Continuous Living Plants … one of the 6Cs for Healthy Soil



Cover the soil constantly … one of the 6Cs for Healthy Soil



Crop and animal diversity … one of the 6Cs for Healthy Soil



Compost and Other Soil Improves … one of the 6Cs for Healthy Soil

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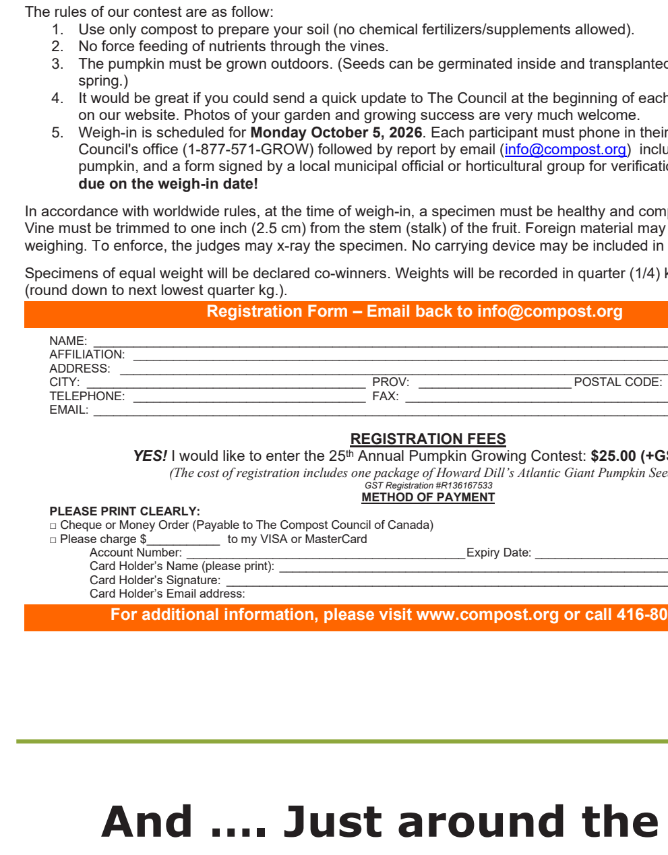
And WOW! It's our 25th Annual Giant Pumpkin Growing Contest … consider joining fellow gardeners across Canada in this friendly growing contest! Details in the letter below.

COMPOST'S GIANTS

The 25th Annual Great Pumpkin Growing Contest



Conseil canadien du COMPOST Council of Canada

Announcing ….

COMPOST'S GIANTS - The 25th Annual Great Pumpkin Growing Contest

Get ready to GROW!

Welcome to this great, but very friendly, competition!

As a participant in this year's contest, you will join an enthusiastic and growing crowd of organics recyclers (compost AND anaerobic digestion professionals, that is) whose objective is to *Grow 'em Big with Compost!* The heaviest pumpkin at the time of weigh-in will be this year's national champion of the pumpkin patch.

As the winner, you will receive bragging rights as well as $500 to donate to a horticultural initiative in your area.

In addition to these rules and regulations, your sign-up kit provides you with an excellent source of websites and tips to learn about the fine art of pumpkin growing. This year we will once again be providing seeds of "Dill's Atlantic Giant" with our starter packages with seeds from pumpkins 1000 lbs +! Each of these packages has only two seeds, but your chances of growing impressive pumpkins will be very high…

The rules of our contest are as follow:

1. Use only compost to prepare your soil (no chemical fertilizers/supplements allowed).
2. No force feeding of nutrients through the vines.
3. The pumpkin must be grown outdoors. (Seeds can be germinated inside and transplanted outside in the early spring.)
4. It would be great if you could send a quick update to The Council at the beginning of each month for inclusion on our website. Photos of your garden and growing success are very much welcome.
5. Weigh-in is scheduled for **Monday October 5, 2026**. Each participant must phone in their results to The Council's office (1-877-571-GROW) followed by report by email (info@compost.org) including a photo of the pumpkin, and a form signed by a local municipal official or horticultural group for verification. **All the info is due on the weigh-in date!**

In accordance with worldwide rules, at the time of weigh-in, a specimen must be healthy and completely undamaged. Vine must be trimmed to one inch (2.5 cm) from the stem (stalk) of the fruit. Foreign material may not be included in the weighing. To enforce, the judges may x-ray the specimen. No carrying device may be included in the weighing.

Specimens of equal weight will be declared co-winners. Weights will be recorded in quarter (1/4) kilogram increments (round down to next lowest quarter kg.).

Registration Form – Email back to info@compost.org

NAME: ____________________
AFFILIATION: ____________________
ADDRESS: ____________________
CITY: ____________ PROV: ____________ POSTAL CODE: ____________
TELEPHONE: ____________ FAX: ____________
EMAIL: ____________________

REGISTRATION FEES

YES! I would like to enter the 25th Annual Pumpkin Growing Contest: **$25.00 (+GST/HST)**

(The cost of registration includes one package of Howard Dill's Atlantic Giant Pumpkin Seeds.)

GST Registration #R136167533

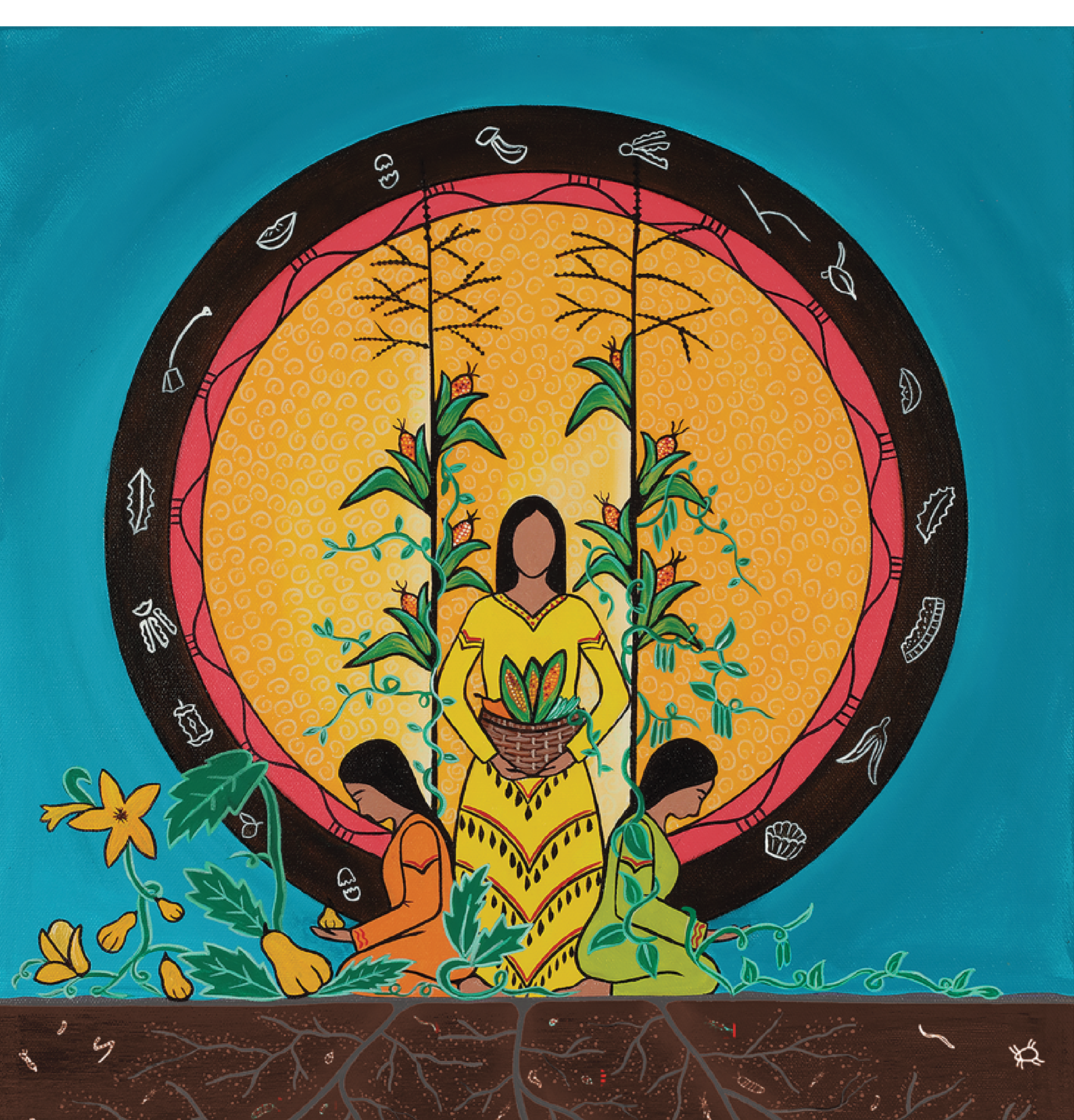
METHOD OF PAYMENT

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:

☐ Cheque or Money Order (Payable to The Compost Council of Canada)
☐ Please charge $__________ to my VISA or MasterCard
Account Number: ____________ Expiry Date: ____________ CVV: ________
Card Holder's Name (please print): ____________________
Card Holder's Signature: ____________________
Card Holder's Email address:

For additional information, please visit www.compost.org or call 416-803-0421

And …. Just around the Corner are the times to celebrate EARTH DAY (Wednesday April 22nd) and *International Compost Awareness Week* (May 3 – 9) … Recycling your organics and using compost are two of the easiest ways to express your love for our Earth! Thank you for doing your part!



FEED THE SOIL THAT FEEDS US

Recycling organics is a simple act of love for our Earth and one another.

Choosing to recycle organics instead of throwing them in the garbage means less greenhouse gas going into the atmosphere. And using compost returns Life to our soils. Living, healthy soils then do their part: providing nutrient-dense food, stronger ecosystems and a more resilient future for all.

The Three Sisters – corn, beans and squash – are a foundational, symbiotic agricultural system of many First Nations communities. When planted together, not only do their harvests provide a complete, nutritious diet but they are symbolic of how our own actions, choices and community are part of a larger, stronger whole. Each plant supports and depends on the others: corn offers a strong stalk for beans to climb, beans return nitrogen to the soil, giving a helping hand to other plants, and squash spreads out to cover the soil, helping hold moisture and protect the soil's living ecosystem.

It's all about the Circle of Life.

For the sustainability and health of our communities, today and for generations to come.

And it can all start with one simple act …

COMPOST !

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Finally …. Here's a much-cherished Spring recipe to incorporate in your celebrations and to enjoy!

growarow.org

soupalicious.ca

relishyomama.org

Dandelion Flower Jelly

This recipe and the special jelly that is produced has become my "Ahah!" moment – the taste of the jelly has huge connections with the taste of honey, making me realize that dandelions should be revered and celebrated for their importance as a first native flower of Spring.

Dandelion flowers are an important (and early Spring) food source for bees and insects.

We should not be treating dandelions as weeds.

This is a wonderful recipe to involve everyone in – from the picking to the preparing and then the tasting (and the "Ahahs").

4 cups dandelion blossoms
3 cups dandelion blossom water
1 package pectin
1 tbsp lemon juice
4 cups sugar

DIRECTIONS:

1. Find an area where the dandelions are just being left alone.
2. Early morning is a good time to pick as you won't likely find any insects already having their flower-y breakfast.
3. Pick just the dandelion flower --- the stem and leaves will add a bitter taste. Some recipes say that you should even remove the green "cup" that holds the flower as it also adds bitterness. I have not found it to detract from the lovely taste and so, in the interest of time, I don't do this extra step.
4. Gently rinse the flowers (and if you find any insects already on the flower, just shake the flower outside before rinsing).
5. Place the flowers in a large pot, cover with water (about 4 cups) and boil for 3 minutes (you are basically making a tea). Stir regularly throughout the boiling period.
6. Pour through a sieve. Save the liquid and compost the flowers. You will want to have 3 cups of the dandelion flower tea-liquid.
7. Add pectin and lemon juice. Bring to a boil for 3 minutes. Keep stirring the mixture.
8. Add the sugar; boil for about 2 ½ minutes. Keep stirring.
9. Skim off any foam prior to pouring into jars that have been prepared for canning. Process according to standard canning methods.

(check out our "how to can" video by visiting: **https://bit.ly/34RqPO0**)

Slightly modified from a recipe shared by Jonah Neufield from the
Zion Church Youth Cookbook,
JUST LIKE MAMA USED TO MAKE

As a subscriber to this newsletter, we're offering you a 32% discount off the 1yr subscription to Harrowsmith for $29.95.

Click here to learn more and subscribe!

Sharing some photos from a recent SEEDY SATURDAY … these are some of the critters who added extra joy to the seed-sharing & swapping happenings at the SEEDY SATURDAY in Utopia, Ontario.

As part of your garden this year, plant and grow an extra row of your favourite veggies and donate the harvest to your local food bank. Help us help all those in need. **www.growarow.org**

The Compost Council of Canada • 16 Northumberland Street • Toronto ON M6H 1P7 • **www.compost.org** • **www.growarow.org**
For more info, please contact Susan Antler, Executive Director, or Danielle Buklis, Programs Manager c/o **info@compost.org**