

Fairfield Allotment Holders Association

Newsletter 8

AGM: The 65th **Annual General Meeting** of the Fairfield Allotment Holder's Association will be held at the Farmer's Arms Hotel, Penny Street, Lancaster on Thursday 9th February 2005 at 7.30 pm. Please note that no smoking will be permitted to take place in the room in which we will meet.

All are welcome: please come and take part. Volunteers to join the committee are always welcome, even on a trial basis... we're looking for a new Chair-person this year, because Gillian's stepping down. However, it doesn't mean that if you come, you're going to be the next Chair-person! Other officers are content to continue, but we can always have elections... If you've a nomination to make for one of the principal posts, it can be done at the AGM but it's helpful to pass it on through the current secretary beforehand. In any case, just come and have your say, and make sure the committee is doing what you want.

If you don't feel like committee work or the regular commitment it involves, but you'd like to help out anyway, John Lambert, the Secretary, would like to hear from you. He wants to compile a list of volunteers for specific jobs. So, if you've experience of fund-raising, legal expertise, especially with leases, or just want to get muscular in working-parties, please talk to John (6 Carr House Lane, Lancaster LA1 1SW Tel: 01524 849371 email: john@jlambert.f9.co.uk)

The Agenda includes: the secretary's report of the year, the treasurer's financial report, and confirmation of rents and concessions for next year. It's proposed that rents be increased - £1 for a full plot, 50p for a half plot, and 25p for the two quarter-plots. What a lot of fun for so little cash... Payment at the AGM, or as soon as possible thereafter, avoids the prospect of payment penalties or even losing your plot, and saves the treasurer a lot of unnecessary trouble.

The other big agenda item is the **planning application** to extend the acreage administered by the association, and thus create more plots. This is likely to be the most ambitious undertaking the Association has gone through in a long time, so the more of us can share in the decision-making, the better.

Did you forget to place your **seed order**? Well it's clear that Santa's not so far away yet, because you could still get the chance to get an order in. Not that there's anything in this for the Association, you understand - it's pure altruism at work here. Just be sure to make any order you've still to make by the date of the AGM, through John Lambert and your order will still be processed.

John (Weedy, that is) seems to have been studying ancient history lately. This is what he sent me, wondering how much of it remains relevant. See what I mean? - Here are '**topical tips** taken from "Ministry of Agriculture Allotment and Garden Guide, January 1945, for those who have not yet ordered or thought about...'

SEED POTATOES

"You can work out the quantity you will need fairly easily if you remember that seed potatoes usually average 5 or 6 tubers to the pound, and that a convenient distance to plant early varieties is a foot apart; other varieties 15 inches apart. As soon as you get your seed potatoes, place them in shallow boxes with the crown or rose end upwards, and keep in a cool, dry place with plenty of light, but frost-proof. Make quite sure by covering in severe weather. Sprouting potatoes makes for earliness and high yields.

SHALLOTS

"One pound of shallots contains about 25 bulbs, and 2 lb. should be about enough for an ordinary allotment row of 30 feet.

OTHER

"Half an ounce of turnips or swedes will sow 100 feet. A quarter of an ounce of leek will give enough plants for six or eight rows thirty feet long.

"One pint of Longpod broad beans will sow a double row 50 feet long. One pint of Windsor broad beans will sow 40 feet of a double row. Half a pint of French or Haricot beans is sufficient for 150 feet. This enables you to sow 2 seeds every 9 inches to allow for failures.

"Half a pint of runner beans will sow one row 50 feet long. One ounce of beet will sow 90 feet of row. Half an ounce of carrot is enough for 100 feet. A small packet of 1/4 oz. of each variety of lettuce should be enough for successive sowings to give summer and winter supplies. One ounce of onion seed will sow 150 feet--by sowing very thinly you can make it go still further.

"Half an ounce of parsnip is enough for 100 feet. One pint of peas will sow 90 feet of row--if you sow very thinly; for very early sowings you should allow a little more seed, as some may rot if the soil is cold and wet. One ounce of radish will give you all you need. "

See you at the AGM!