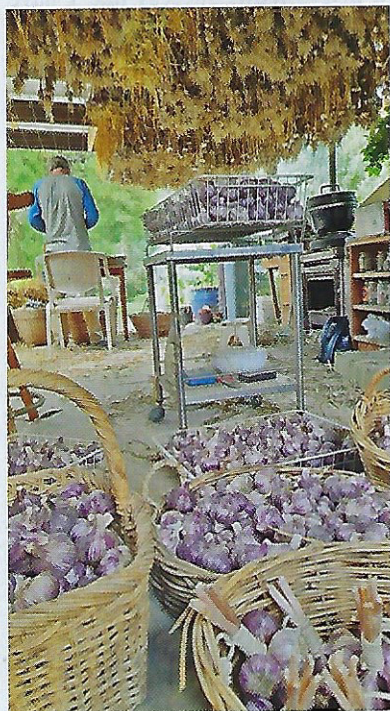




Planting by the Moon

By WWOOF Office, W Tree, Vic.

WWOOF hosts Ross and Lisa have discovered that the best results come from aligning their farming practice with the moon planting calendar.



This issue the WWOOF Office caught up with Victorian hosts Ross Jones and Lisa Timson, who live in the historic former gold-mining town of Creswick, between Ballarat and Daylesford.

ROSS AND LISA'S STORY

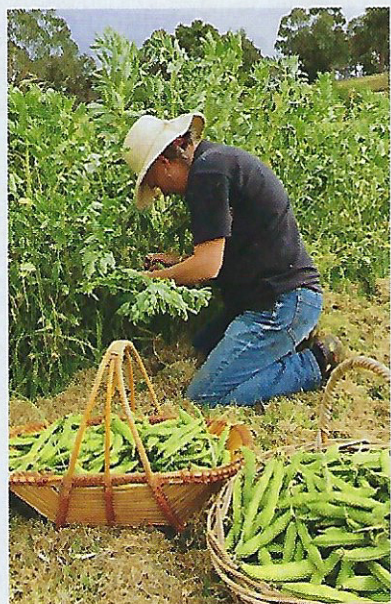
We have lived on the banks of Slaty Creek for 14 years with our daughter Cecilia. We spent eight years looking in earnest for the right property. Creswick was not even on our radar until I stumbled across this farm on the internet. It had been in the same family for three generations. As soon as we drove up the driveway, we knew it was the one. Rundown, but a little slice of paradise.

We are certified organic farmers working by the phases of the moon and using minimal machinery. We grow six main varieties of

garlic: turbans/hardneck (indeterminate): purple and white; artichokes/softneck: French messidrome and Italian late; and Creoles/hardneck: Rose du Lautrec and Rojo del Pais Baza. We also grow broad beans, snow peas and cucumbers.

Our seasons are regular, we plant in April and until November, our work mainly involves weeding and compost making. November to April is our busy period harvesting, cleaning garlic, preparing beds and mulching them for next year's crop. We keep our food miles very low, selling our produce predominately at farmers' markets in Creswick, Ballarat, and Daylesford, and also at local greengrocers, restaurants and co-ops.

My love (Ross) of growing garlic grew from a love of eating it. I wanted to be an organic farmer from the time I was 15 years old; it



has been a long and winding road to get here. I have been growing garlic for 28 years, 14 here and 14 at a weekend I owned in the Otways. I almost know what I am doing, but I still learn something new every day.

ABOUT MOON PLANTING

Moon planting is a very simple science, and one I have always found extremely effective. As the moon controls the tides it also controls the sap run in plants. During a waxing moon the sap is drawn up and during a waning moon it is drawn down. A brief farming plan is as follows

New Moon

Two days either side rising vitality, cultivate the soil ready for fertile time ahead.

First Quarter

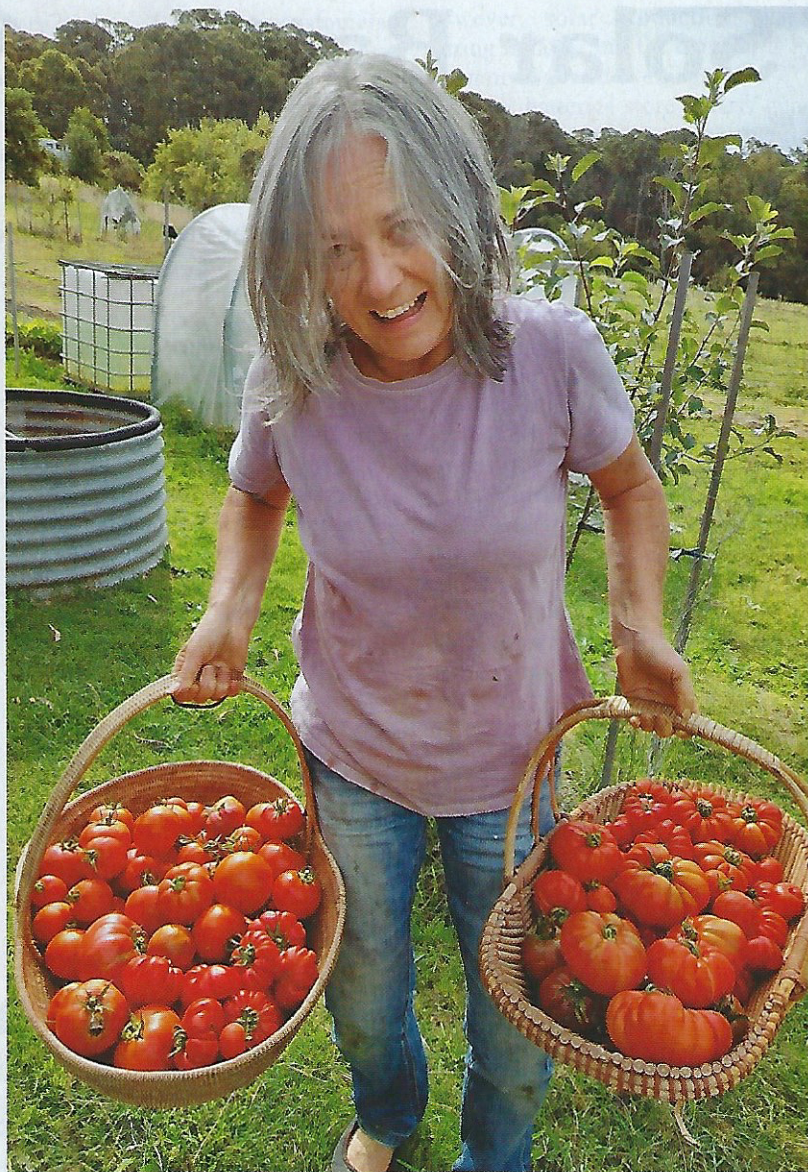
Four days either side fertile time plant all fruiting and leafy crops.

Full Moon

Two days either side do not plant, high sap run, seeds germinate too quickly resulting in weak spindly growth.

Last Quarter

Third and fourth day before and



third and fourth day after, good for all root crops. Two days either side barren period, low sap run, good for weeding, pruning and harvesting.

WHY WE BECAME WWOOF HOSTS

Lisa and I have travelled extensively and have been shown amazing hospitality in many corners of the world. It is natural for us to show hospitality to others, we love meeting new people, breaking bread with them and hearing their stories. Being WWOOF hosts enables us to share our knowledge. Although our farm work is not overly physi-

cally demanding there never seems enough hours in the day to get everything done so extra hands are greatly appreciated.

WWOOFers have so much to do in their free time here, there are bush walking and mountain bike trails, gold panning and fossicking and we are within walking distance of the beautiful St Georges Lake for swimming, fishing and kayaking.

JOIN WWOOF

If you would like to meet incredible hosts like Ross, Lisa and Cecilia, join our community today, website: wwooof.com.au. ☺