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ORGANIC BASICS IN HOME GARDENING

By Dr. Chew Boon Hock, an author and a retired agricultural research scientist with MARDI.



Organic gardening is eco, people and home friendly. You don't have to be a 'green finger' to do organic gardening. Organic methods can be used in all areas of the gardening, from lawns to container plantings such as in pots and troughs. The aim of organic gardening is to work in harmony with nature and not to manipulate nature. Man is not the master of nature.

Dr. Chew with his books on "Grow Your Own Vegetables"

ORGANIC BASIC



Feeding the soil

Conventional farmers feed the plant whereas organic farmers feed the soil. Billions of teeming soil micro-organisms breakdown organic matters and nutrients in the soil. They play an important role in plant nutrient recycling and nutrient uptake by the roots of the plant. Their activities also help to improve soil physically, chemically and biologically. Soil managed this way tends to produce healthier plants that can better tolerate attacks by pests and diseases. Compost making is the basic of all forms of sustainable agriculture. Compost, which provides the needed organic matter, feeds the soil micro-organisms which in turn help to feed the plants. No garden should go without one.



How to make quality compost

Compost is an important component in organic gardening. Compost making is in fact a process of nutrient recycling. It was done by our ancestors in time immemorial. It was an art then but now it is a part of biotechnology, which involves the science of degradation process of organic matter by billions of soil beneficial microbes. The use of microbial culture in composting is to hasten the composting process and rid of bad odour emitting during the decomposition process. The microbial culture is available in many shops selling fertilizers. EM1 is the popular brand. Please refer to my book "Grow Your Own Vegetables" p. 156-158 for details in making and application of the quality compost made at home.



Organic fertilizer

Compost is merely a soil conditioner with low nutrient content not enough to satisfy the nutrient requirement for a full cycle of plant growth. Nutrient supplement is therefore necessary to ensure the growth of nutrient rich and wholesome vegetables. This nutrient supplement in the form of organic fertilizer is usually applied as basal in planting bed and at certain stage of growth of the plant and is called top-dressing in agriculture terminology. They are made from mixing of chicken manure, rice bran and other materials using microbial solution for its fermentation. For details of formulation, making procedure and its application, please refer to my book "Grow Your Own Vegetables" p. 162-165

- Article to be continued on page 7 -

Persatuan Alumni AOTS Malaysia (PAAM)

No. 52A Jalan SS22/25,
Damansara Jaya, 47400
Petaling Jaya, Selangor.
Tel: 03-7726 2863
Fax: 03-7728 2348
Email: paam@aots.org
www.aots.org

Printer: Ang Teck Seng,
Seng Hoe Printing Process
(KDN PQ1780/3427)
No 33, Jalan Hang Tuah 2,
Taman Salak Selatan, 57100
Kuala Lumpur.
Tel: 03-7956 2600

ANNOUNCEMENT

**35TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
PERSATUAN ALUMNI AOTS MALAYSIA**

**SUNDAY, 19TH APRIL 2020, 2 PM
@ HOTEL GRAND DORSETT, SUBANG JAYA**

**2020
PAAM'S
AGM**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Mr Tan Teng Ek
President

First and foremost, let me take this opportunity to wish one and all a "Happy New Year!"

I am glad to present this first issue of PAAM Newsletter 2020. 2019 was an eventful year for PAAM. We successfully organized PAAM Annual Dinner 2019 in which 103 members and friends attended and enjoyed every moment of the Dinner.

Apart from conducting a few Japanese Language classes for our corporate clients, we also managed to conduct our inaugural Japanese Language Conversational classes (Module One) which lasted three months. 15 members attended this module one. In the year under review, PAAM also organized some interesting half day tea talks and a Tanabata Celebration which saw fairly good responses. Not to be always confined within the four walls of our premises, we also successfully organized a few educational excursions to some places of interest within Selangor.

In this first issue of 2020 PAAM Newsletter, we will focus on the following activities and areas of interests:

1. Organic basic of home gardening;
2. Resourcefulness – a key human trait for successful entrepreneurship;
3. Comments and observation on the use of the Japanese word - BANZAI;
4. Write up on health talk on "Heart Attack";
5. Write up on tea talk on "Organic Home Gardening";
6. We appreciate Denso Malaysia, our strong corporate supporter for PAAM's Japanese Language trainings; and
7. Announcing the revamping of our new web portal.

I am pleased to remind you that the most important PAAM event for 2020 ie 35th PAAM AGM will be held as follows. For this year's AGM, there will be an election of office-bearers in the Central Committee as well as deliberation on several proposed amendments to PAAM's constitution.

Date: Sunday 19 April 2020

Time: 2.00pm

Venue: Grand Dorsett Hotel, Subang Jaya

Prior to the commencement of the said AGM, members who are attending the AGM are invited to a sumptuous buffet luncheon from 12.30pm onward. Kindly attend this important function.

Last but not least, I would like to appeal to all you members to write and contribute your original articles to this Newsletter. Any articles that are of general interest would be most welcomed. A token of appreciation (in the form of a cash voucher) would also be forwarded to contributors for their efforts.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all our Chinese members and friends, "Gong Xi Fa Cai".

Thank you and warmest regards.

Tan Teng Ek
President PAAM (2019-2020)

What is AOTS?

AOTS or the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarships, a Japanese agency, jointly supported by Japan METI and the industry, is entrusted with the task of developing human resources in the third world. It has trained over 8000 Malaysians over the last 3 decades. AOTS is now renamed as HIDA.

All AOTS ex-trainees are entitled to be admitted as a member of the Persatuan Alumni AOTS Malaysia (PAAM) which is the alumni association for all who have participated in AOTS training programs or even events conducted locally by PAAM.

To be a member all you need to do is to fill up a membership application form and submit it to the Secretariat office. There are 3 categories of membership ie life member, ordinary member and corporate membership.

PAAM OFFICE

No. 52A Jalan SS 22/25, 47400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor
Tel: 03-77262863 Fax: 03-77282348 Email: paam@aots.org

Announcements

Articles for Newsletter

To make your newsletter more interesting, we would like to appeal for interesting articles from members. Your articles can be on any topic but should not be too technical. We would appreciate articles that are original and will make an interesting read, between 100 to 200 words. As a token of appreciation, PAAM will send you cash vouchers for articles that are published in PAAM Newsletters.



Japanese Language Teacher - Vacancy

WANTED – PAAM is looking for a free lance Japanese Language teacher who can teach small groups preferably in the evenings in clients' office premises. The person we are looking for must have teaching experience and must be able to speak the language fluently, if he/she is not a native speaker. Must have own transport. Interested – please write in to paam@aots.org for further details etc.



HEALTH TALK ON HEART ATTACKS



A section of the crowd attending the health talk

On the sunny afternoon of 2 November 2019, PAAM organised a health talk on Heart Attacks, facilitated by Dr Kim Kah Kwi, formerly a medical researcher in the University of Malaya.

This half a day talk, attended by 13 members and friends, focused on how our heart channels vital energy to all our organs and whole body via our vascular blood vessels, how to keep our heart functioning & regulating well, how to measure blood pressure, how to identify early signs of heart failures and prevent and detect impending medical problems.

Another important take-away point is that diabetes or uncontrolled high blood glucose will eventually lead to failures of many vital organs. This is because our various body parts need highly oxygenated blood to function properly. Blood containing high blood glucose means reduced oxygen in the blood which will in turn compromise the proper functioning of all the vital organs. Hence it is of utmost importance to watch our diet (meaning less intake of carbohydrate & sugar but more fibre), sleeping well, exercising regularly and keeping our stress level well managed at all times.

We tend to take our health for granted and it was a good reminder from Dr. Kim that everyone should pay a little more attention to our present state of health NOW if we do not wish, in future, to pay heavily to restore our failing health, when the various premature chronic medical conditions start to manifest themselves.



PAAM President Mr T E Tan presenting a token of appreciation to Dr Kim.



Members of PAAM joining in for a group photo with Dr. Kim Kah Kwi

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2019-2020

Name of CCM	Position	Name of CCM	Position
Tan Teng Ek	President	Siao Kent Wah	Committee Member
How Chee Seng	Vice President	Yang Chor Leong	Committee Member
Yap Choon Ming	General Secretary	Jacqueline Ooi Fatt Choo	Committee Member
Cheong Lye Foon	Asst. General Secretary	Stephen Wong Kam Sun	Committee Member
Khor Kai Tong	Hon Treasurer	Yeong Soon Seng	Committee Member
-	Asst. Hon Treasurer		

JAPANESE LANGUAGE: BANZAI! (CHEERS! HOORAY!)



This is a regular column contributed by Mr Tan Teng Ek on the peculiarities of the Japanese language as well as his observations and insights on everyday life in Japan.

In the Western society, whenever people need to instil that spirit of determination, encouragement or excitement before a sporting event, there would be shouts of “Hurrah!”, “Hip hip hooray!” or “Yippee!”

But in Japan, their interjections are often “Banzai! Banzai! Banzai!” which maybe the equivalent of “cheers!” or “hooray!”

The word banzai literally means ten thousand years. The word’s origins come from the Chinese word wansui (万歳).



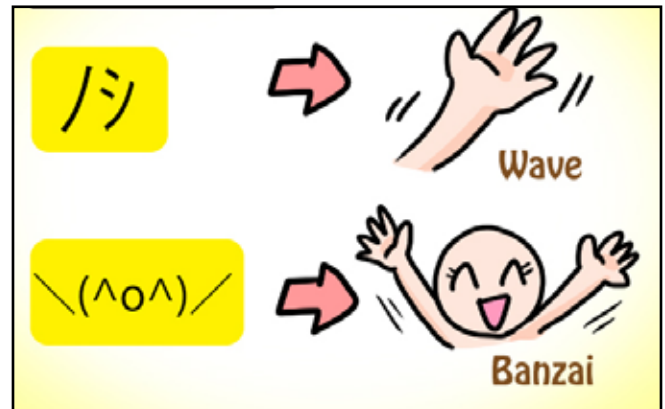
Banzai was originally believed to be used within the military and during official ceremonies involving the Emperor. In the olden days during a battle, the officer

leading the charge would scream “Banzai! Banzai! Banzai!” which can be translated to mean “Victory!” “Victory!” “Victory!”

In any official ceremony involving the Emperor, like the proclamation of the Japanese National Constitution, at the appearance of the Japanese Emperor shouts of Banzai! Banzai! Banzai! would normally echo through the hall with the people raising their hands skyward. Banzai in this case means “Long live the Emperor” or “May he live to be ten thousand years old.”

But today, whenever there are social activities the word banzai is uttered just as an expression of elation and encouragement. The Japanese shout “banzai” to express their happiness, to celebrate a victory, to hope for longevity and so on. It is commonly done together with a large group of people.

This exclamation is commonly uttered three times Banzai! Banzai! Banzai! for example, to psyche a



team before the commencement of a sporting event to go for the win or victory!

Banzai! can sometimes be heard in airports or on Shinkansen platforms whenever the Japanese send-off someone who is leaving for a far distant land. They also scream Banzai! when seeing off excited newlyweds taking leave for a long much awaited honey moon. When a baby is born, friends and relatives will also gather around to celebrate the occasion with shouts of “Banzai!!”

So, when your Japanese friend informs you of his recent promotion or of receiving a good raise in salary, to show that we know some Japanese culture, just shout “Banzai!!” I am sure your Japanese friend will be much touched and impressed. Who knows his or her response might be a “Banzai!!” much louder and even more enthusiastic than yours.

Banzai! Banzai! Banzai! This first issue of PAAM Newsletter for 2020 is out on time!!



Source: dreamstime.com

RESOURCEFULNESS – A KEY HUMAN TRAIT FOR SUCCESS IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP



By Stephen Wong who is also a Committee member of PAAM

In the last two newsletters, I had talked about tenacity and passion as two of the personal traits that can make a person successful in business, entrepreneurship, and many other professions. The third primary human trait that relates to successful human behaviour is that of resourcefulness. What is this resourcefulness and why is it so important? Looking at its definition would reveal all its potentials.

Resourcefulness is defined as the ability of the entrepreneur to identify opportunities, regulate and direct behaviour to successfully cope with the task of creating, managing and motivating an organisation, finding and utilising operating resources to pursue and sustain performance (Bradley, Shepherd & Wiklund, 2011; Bhide, 2000; Christensen & Knezek, 2014).

Many founder-owner entrepreneurs are by nature scarce of resources and finances at the start-up stage of their business. Hence, the ability to cope with and successfully manage a business to its eventual success is by no means easy. The entrepreneur needs to find the right operating resources to pursue and sustain the firm's performance. Being resourceful helps him or her to achieve this goal. How does this happen?

The nature of entrepreneurial resourcefulness identifies and explicates three generic competencies, namely the cognitive, affective, and action-orientation which will differentiate the entrepreneur from the non-entrepreneur. By competencies, I refer to one's mental capabilities to successfully cope with or adapt to any adverse situation arising from the external environmental harshness that the entrepreneur may have to deal with.

The cognitive competence will help him/her to manage his/her thought processes, beliefs and expectations, namely, the ability to:



Source: naem.org

- (i) analyse and understand the volumes of market information for opportunity;
- (ii) take risks;
- (iii) perceive and make sense of any equivocal reality of opportunities;
- (iv) innovate;
- (v) tolerate any uncertainty; and
- (vi) expect high-effort-high-outcome belief.

The affective competence, on the other hand, enables him/her to develop the ability to:

- (i) control feelings of personal withdrawal and depression;
- (ii) compete with the desire to excel
- (iii) persevere under whatever circumstances;
- (iv) live the high central-life-interest; and
- (v) feel dissatisfied with his/her own status quo.

Finally, the action-oriented competence generates in him/her the ability to:

- (i) take charge and lead employees;
- (ii) influence external agencies;
- (iii) find, marshal and control resources; and
- (iv) establish strong networks.

Thus, the central concept of entrepreneurial behaviour (Misra & Kumar, 2000) recognises and motivates both aspects of behaviour to integrate as well as relate the entrepreneur's personal attributes of leadership to his/her organisational performance (Fleenor, 2006).

JAPANESE LANGUAGE IN-HOUSE TRAINING PROGRAM

A WORD OF THANKS TO OUR STRONG CORPORATE SUPPORTER DENSO MALAYSIA

PAAM takes this opportunity to thank Denso Malaysia for their strong support in our Japanese language training activities.

We are now in the process of providing intensive Japanese Language training up to Intermediate 2 level to one of their technical staff, Encik Muhammad Hanif Bin Romli who will undergo a course of technical training at their Denso plant in Japan sometime end of March 2020.

Encik Muhammad Hanif Bin Romli is studying Japanese language under the tutorship of Ms Misako Matsunoshita, our native-speaking teacher. He will be completing this Intermediate 2 level training sometime mid-March 2020, before commencement of his 12 months long technical training in Japan.

We take this opportunity to wish Encik Muhammad Hanif Bin Romli a happy time of learning Japanese language as well as a most enjoyable and successful training in Denso Japan!



Encik Muhammad Hanif Bin Romli, Denso technical staff

ORGANIC BASICS IN HOME GARDENING *(continued from cover story)*

CULTURAL PRACTICES

Bed Making

Growing vegetables on raised bed is recommended. The raised beds should be of 6 inches high, 3 to 4 feet wide and unlimited length as desired. Incorporate 2kg/m² of matured compost in the soil. In addition, add 200g/m² of the organic fertilizer, 250g of GML (ground magnesium limestone) and CIRP (Christmas Island Rock Phosphate) for soil pH control and better root growth. You can get GML and CIRP in any fertilizer store or garden centre. Finally, spray the bed with diluted microbial culture (dilute 1 ml to 1 litre of water).

Natural pest control

Incidence of pests and diseases are part of the great food chain in nature. So, lady bird beetles feed on green flies, bird catches insects and toad devour slugs is the way of nature. As an organic gardener you can capitalise on this situation by creating conditions to attract these natural pest controllers. So, make your garden wildlife friendly by not using any toxic chemical spray in the garden. Other alternatives involve the use of barriers and traps, sticky yellow tapes, companion planting and crop rotation, which requires some knowledge to carry out.

Weed management

Weeds are plants that grow at the wrong place and at the wrong time, competing for food and water, but they can be a valuable ingredient for compost. There are effective methods to keep weed under control without the use of chemicals. You can either use hoeing, mulching the bed with compost to smother out the weeds, or the simplest of them all - if you have a small garden, hand weeding which is laborious but effective.

Disease control

The best measure to control diseases is through cultivation practices, which include wider planting spacing for better ventilation between plants; use of resistant varieties, transplant only clean and healthy seedlings, crop rotation etc. Keeping the garden clean is important. Remove and burn off diseased plants and residues. Remember one very important fact: healthy soil grows healthy plants; healthy plants are better in tolerating attacks by pests and diseases. Finally, treat soil with the beneficial soil microbial solution, which contains some anti pathogenic bacteria that can control the spread of certain diseases.

Conclusion

No activity is greater than that of organic agriculture since it concerns with the very possibility of human survival. So is home organic gardening. We are what we eat, and healthy people make happy family and happy families build healthy nation.



Dr. Chew encourages gardeners and farmers to practice mixed or multiple planting

TEA TALK ON “HOME ORGANIC GARDENING”



Members and friends of PAAM posing with Dr Chew for a group photo

On 14 December 2019 PAAM organised a tea talk on “Home organic gardening”. The talk was facilitated by Dr Chew Boon Hock, a research geneticist who had worked in the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) for nearly 30 years, heading the Rice Research Unit in the early years and later as Head, coordinating researches on inplant science and genetics. Dr Chew is married to food chemist, Chia Joo Suan, who had authored 3 books relating to food.

A total of 14 interested members and friends of PAAM turned up to learn from the agricultural expert all the practical tips, dos and don'ts on successful home

gardening. The bespectacled gentleman has a green thumb from an early age and his passion can be seen by the info shared with his audience, through his trials and errors, his encouragement to experiment with home composting and gardening. Enthusiasm from the crowd can be seen by the many questions fielded to Dr Chew during the talk.

A takeaway learning was the gardening tip given by Dr Chew ie gardeners should practise multiple cropping, which essentially means having several types of plants in one lot to lower the number of pests. Plants which have bitter fruits or leaves are less prone to pest infestation/disease and are pest resistant and can serve as protector to other vulnerable plants.

Before concluding his talk, Dr Chew reminded participants that “Organic living can be led by anybody if they're keen to do it. Whether you have a piece of land or you stay in a high-rise building, you can grow your own organic food.”

After the talk some participants purchased a copy of Dr Chew's book “GROW YOUR OWN VEGETABLES” sold at PAAM at a special price.



Mr Yeong, Central Committee presenting a token of appreciation to Dr Chew.

REDESIGNING PAAM'S PORTAL TO BE MORE USER FRIENDLY....

This is to announce that, due to some unavoidable issues and obstacles, our web portal had remained dormant for quite some time.

We have recently engaged the services of a new IT consultant to revive our web portal. Construction works are expected to be completed within the next couple of months and we hope that you can access our new portal by March 2020 for information, contacts and activities of PAAM and AOTS Japan.



RELAUNCHING **WWW.AOTS.ORG** SOON...

2020 PAAM'S AGM



35TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ATTENDANCE REPLY FORM

**PERSATUAN ALUMNI AOTS MALAYSIA
35TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Sunday 19th April 2020 (2pm) @
Hotel Grand Dorsett, Subang Jaya**

Name: _____

PAAM membership no.: _____

Contact number: _____

Email: _____

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box below to indicate your attendance/non attendance, and fax/ email this form to PAAM below address.

**BUFFET LUNCH @ 12.30PM
(for all members attending AGM)**

ATTENDING

NOT ATTENDING

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING @ 2PM

ATTENDING

NOT ATTENDING

Note: The Hotel will directly bill non PAAM members for the cost of buffet lunch.

RSVP Deadline 11.4.2020

*PAAM Office: 03-77262863, or Fax to: 03-77282348
or Email to paam@aots.org*

Dear members,
May the Year of the Rat bring you good luck & good fortune.
HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR & GONG XI FA CAI!

