

THE MASTERCLASS WEEKEND

in association with the NVS



Friday 7th - Sunday 9th November 2025

THE ROYAL VICTORIA HOTEL LLANBERIS

PROGRAMME OF SPEAKERS

Friday 7th November

16.00 - 18.30 Arrive at The Royal Victoria Hotel to check in and relax before dinner.

18.30 - 19.30 A three course evening meal will be served (you may order wine at your table)

19:45 - 20.45 Welcoming Back a Masterclass Legend: Medwyn Williams MBE, FNVS



For 26 years, Medwyn Williams has been the driving force behind the Masterclass weekend, so it's only fitting that we welcome him back, but this time as a guest speaker.

Medwyn Williams is one of the most recognised vegetable growers in the world. Famous for his breath-taking displays, particularly at the RHS Chelsea he is also a top grower within the NVS, being the only person to win the large collection 5 years in a row at the National Championships. Renowned for his expertise, Medwyn has been growing and exhibiting vegetables at the highest level for decades. In his informative and entertaining presentation, Medwyn will share insights from his remarkable journey from early beginnings to becoming a National Champion.

Expect practical advice, a touch of humour, and expert techniques, especially on cultivating top-quality parsnips for exhibition. Whether you're a seasoned grower or just starting out, this is a session not to be missed.

20:45– 21.00 Question and Answer session.

21.00- Time to relax after your long journey and perhaps share your gardening experiences with some of the speakers, fellow growers, and exhibitors. Why not even enjoy a night cap at the bar before retiring!

Saturday 8th November

8.00 - 9.00 Cooked Breakfast.

9.15 – 10.15 – Sweet Peas for Everyone with Sarah Haisley



Sarah Hailey, a long-time exhibitor and active member of the National Sweet Pea Society. With over ten years of hands-on experience growing sweet peas for show, Sarah shares her knowledge with warmth and enthusiasm, making the world of sweet peas accessible to all. Whether you're a beginner gardener or a seasoned grower, this talk will take you through the full growing journey from selecting varieties and sowing seeds to training, feeding, and preparing blooms for exhibition.

Alongside expert tips and real-world advice, Sarah includes personal insights, lessons learned, and plenty of encouragement to help you succeed with your own sweet peas.

Sarah will bring a selection of sweet pea seeds available for purchase after the event, ideal for anyone feeling inspired to start growing right away.

10.15 - 10.30 Question and Answer session

10.30 - 10.45 Coffee / Tea Break

10.45 - 11.45 - All About Onions: with Sean Egan, FNVS



Join Sean Egan as he shares his journey and expertise in growing prize-winning onions from his garden located in Kerry, Southwest Ireland. From mastering the art of cultivating onions from seeds and sets to producing perfectly sized bulbs under 250g and under 450g, Sean along with his wife Teresa, have achieved top results, including winning the All-Ireland Quality Onion Championship in 2023 2024 and 2025.

In this talk, Sean will explain his growing methods, the unique conditions of his local climate, and tips for preparing onions for show. Sean will also provide an insider's look into how the Irish agricultural show system work, from local qualifications to the prestigious All-Ireland final and what judges look for in a champion onion.

11.45 - 12.00 Question and Answer session

12.00 – 14:00 A buffet lunch after which you have an opportunity to take a walk around the grounds of the Royal Victoria Hotel or perhaps a walk down to the Snowdon Mountain Railway in the village of Llanberis.

14.00 - 15.00 Building Soil Resilience' with Anton Rosenfeld



'Building Soil Resilience' will look at how to future proof your soil in a changing climate where we may experience droughts alternating with heavy rain. We will look at the various elements of a healthy soil such as soil life, structure, organic matter and how to assess them using basic resources. We will then examine the various ways that you can boost soil health using a range of sustainable inputs, no dig or minimal tillage and green manures and cover crops.

Anton Rosenfeld is research manager at Garden Organic. His work has ranged from projects with commercial field-scale growers to small-scale community gardens and allotments. Currently he manages their citizen science programme, runs training courses for the public and community groups and writes regularly for Kitchen Garden Magazine. He has a passion for soils and composting and has also built a seed collection and resources for growing multicultural crops.

15.00 - 15.15 Question and Answer session.

15.15 – 15.30 Coffee / Tea Break

15.30 - 16.30 New for 2025 – Growers' Marketplace!

We're delighted to introduce and trial a new addition in our weekend programme. Growers' Marketplace is a chance for speakers and attendees to formally swap or sell seeds, plants and sundries or chat with fellow growers over a cuppa.

Tables will be available, so bring what you like to sell or share.

16.30 - 17.30 Discover how to grow quality Stump Carrots and French Beans to by Mark Perry



Mark is one of the top growers of Stump Carrots winning the National Championships three years in a row (2021-2024) and will give an illustrated talk and share his methods for growing for exhibition with success.

Mark will also cover French Beans and provide tips for growing straight, uniform pods. He will show how to select the best specimens and how to prepare your beans to impress the judges and help your chances of winning that coveted red card!

Mark believes anyone can grow to a very high standard and even win tickets at The NVS national championships, as long as you are prepared to put in time and effort and pay attention to detail.

17.30- 17.45 Question and Answer session.

17.45 - 18.30 Time to relax and do your own thing before your evening meal, you may even feel the need to enjoy a drink at the bar!

18.30 - 19.30 You can now indulge yourself in a three-course evening meal. (you may order your wine at the table from the Victoria's reasonably priced selection)

19.30 - 20.30 Learning experiences from growing giant veg - Graham Barratt



Join us for a fascinating talk exploring what growing giant vegetables can teach us about gardening at any scale. From advanced germination techniques and the surprising role of gall nematodes to the impact of soil microbiomes on plant health, this session will share practical insights for all growers.

Graham will also touch on the thrill of record-breaking, the value of seed sharing for new growers, and some of the controversies within the giant veg world, Yes, even taxonomy debates!

Whether you're a seasoned grower or just curious, there's something here for everyone.

20.30 – 20.45 Question and Answer session.

20.45 - 21.00 – Raffle

We hope this year's raffle will feature a fantastic selection of prizes. All proceeds will go towards sponsoring novice classes at regional branches within the National vegetable Society, helping to encourage and support the next generation of growers.

Spot prizes are also warmly welcomed and greatly appreciated, every contribution makes a difference.

Sunday 9th November

8.00 - 9.00 Cooked breakfast

9.15 - 9.30 Photo call, bring your camera along and take a group photo as a memento of the occasion.

9.30 - 10.30 Growing Exhibition Potatoes with Sherie Plumb, FNVS



Sherie is one of the NVS`s best ever exhibitors and has been at the forefront of growing for many years. Her knowledge is unrivalled, particularly in growing potatoes where she has won the World Potato Championship, The National Potato Championship of Great Britain, and the NVS Nationals with Potatoes on numerous occasions.

Sherie`s talk is a PowerPoint of photos of the method that she uses to grow potatoes from receiving the seed to preparation of the bed and planting. she will discuss the cultivars she grows

before moving on to watering and storage before the shows.

10.30 - 10.45 Question and Answer session.

10.45 - 11.00 Coffee / Tea Break

11.00 – 11.02 - Remembrance Sunday - 2 Minutes Silence

11.02 - 12.00 'Gardeners Question time with the Speakers'. A roundup of the weekend. It doesn't matter how well you listened to the talks, there's always that gardening problem or question that you forgot to ask that may be still bothering you. It allows you the opportunity to ask the speakers further questions on growing that may not even be related to any subject discussed during the seminar, why not challenge them with a problem that's been a source of worry to you for so long.

12.00 - Traditional Welsh Sunday Lunch before departing.