

# Vegetable Plants

April 2024

All our vegetable plants are grown in peat-free compost.

## Onions

**SOIL:** Sunny position in fertile cultivated ground with good drainage and a fine tilth. Tread the soil down to make the surface firm before planting.

**CULTIVATION:** Plant out the seedling clumps 20 cm apart - They will push themselves apart as they expand. Water only in dry weather. Stop watering once the onions have swollen. Pull back the covering soil to expose the bulb surface to the sun.

**HARVEST:** As soon as the leaves start to yellow and die back. Choose a dry day.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Onion 'Red Baron'</b> - Superb quality red onion. Strong flavour. Harvest: August – September.</li></ul>                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Onion 'Rijnsburger 5'</b> - Good quality round bulbs. Suitable for storage. Harvest: Early August. Available early May.</li></ul> |

## Beets – Beetroot, Spinach, Chard

**SOIL:** Sunny spot in moisture retentive soil. Can be grown in containers and troughs.

**CULTIVATION:** Plant 10cm apart and 30cm between rows. Keep area weed free and water moderately during dry periods.

**HARVEST:** Pull out beetroots when they are about cricket ball size. For perpetual spinach and chard, pick outer leaves carefully and regularly while they are young and fresh, leaving the central foliage to develop for later pickings.

<b>Beetroot</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>'Boltardy' – Globe variety.</b> Smooth skin with deep red flesh.</li></ul>



<b>Beet leaf</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Perpetual spinach</b> – Similar to spinach, but the leaves are larger, darker and fleshier. Use as a 'cut and come again' crop. Available late May.</li><li>• <b>Chard 'Bright Lights'</b> – Grows 45cm high with attractive coloured leafstalks. Can be used as an ornamental plant.</li></ul>

# Tomatoes - Eight different varieties

**SOIL:** Fertile well-drained soil or grow in pots with potting compost. Choose a sunny, sheltered spot.

**CULTIVATION:** Water plants daily and once flowers have started to appear, feed with tomato fertiliser every week to ensure the best fruit.

**TRAILING TYPES** - use in hanging baskets and containers. Bush variety - no need to remove side shoots

- **Tomato 'Tumbling Tom Yellow'** - Cascading, highly productive variety. Sweetly flavoured yellow cherry fruit
- **Tomato 'Tumbling Tom Red'** - Cascading, highly productive variety. Sweetly flavoured red cherry fruit

**CORDON TYPES** - the aim is to create a single-stemmed plant. Snap out shoots that grow in leaf joints and when your plant has produced four sets of flowering trusses, pinch out the growing tip to ensure all its energy goes into producing fruit

- **Tomato 'Ailsa Craig'** - Bright red, medium sized fruits. Famous for its flavour. Matures early
- **Tomato 'Gardeners Delight'** - Cherry Tomato. Old favourite with great flavour
- **Tomato 'Sungold'** - Small, delicious tasting orange coloured fruit on long trusses. Ideal for salads
- **Tomato 'Tigerella'** - Yellow stripes on red fruit. Rich, tangy flavour.

**BUSH TYPES** - No need to remove side shoots.

- **Tomato 'San Marzano'** - Large plum tomato. Ideal for classic Italian sauces.
- **Tomato 'Totem'** - A dwarf bush variety suitable for containers. Red cherry tomatoes.

**Brassicas** - A wide range of leafy vegetables like cabbage, brussels sprouts, broccoli, kale and cauliflower.

**SOIL:** Brassicas do not like acidic soil so add lime to the soil if necessary, aim for a pH of 6.5-7.5.

They grow best in partial shade, in firm, fertile, free-draining soil. Tread on the soil to remove any air pockets and make the surface very firm.

**CULTIVATION:** Plant 30cm apart for small cabbages to 75cm apart for brussels sprouts. Keep well-watered until established. Apply a foliar feed in summer.

**HARVEST:** Summer cabbage, cauliflower and calabrese – July onwards  
Brussels sprouts (from bottom of plant upwards), early and late varieties of broccoli, autumn and winter cauliflower and cabbage – October to the following spring.

**PESTS:** Cabbage white butterfly and birds – protect with net, try CDs on strings or a **scarecrow**. Inspect plants regularly for caterpillars.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Brussels Sprouts 'Bedford Darkmar 21'</b> - Pick from bottom of stem and work upwards. Harvest: mid-August – early April. <b>Available May.</b></li></ul>
<b>Cabbage</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>'Stonehead'</b> - Early ball head type. Round medium green heads. Good bolting resistance. Harvest: June – September.</li><li>• <b>'Red Drumhead'</b> - Red Cabbage. Solid round heads. A compact variety suitable for the small plot. Harvest: June – September.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Calabrese 'Marathon'</b> - Produces small, evenly sized buds with good bud colour. Deep well formed heads. Tolerant to downy mildew. Matures after 75 – 95 days. <b>Available May.</b></li></ul>
<b>Cauliflower</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>'Snowball'</b> – Early variety and also suitable for successional growing. Harvest: July – August.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Purple Sprouting Broccoli</b> - Popular plant for 'cut and come again' crop. High yielding. Harvest January - May. <b>Available June.</b></li><li>• <b>Kale 'Black Magic'</b> – Cavalo Nero type. Striking dark, narrow, well-textured leaves. <b>Available June.</b></li></ul>

# Squashes - Summer type: Courgettes and Marrows, Winter type: Pumpkin and Butternut Squash

**SOIL:** Sunny location and fertile moist soil.  
Can be grown in large pots (at least 45cm across).

**CULTIVATION:** Plenty of water is essential, especially when the plants are in flower and then when the fruits have started to swell. Sink a 15cm pot alongside the plants when planting out. Water into this so it goes right down to the roots and does not sit around the neck of the plant, which can lead to rotting.

On sandy or light soil, regular drenches with a liquid feed will help boost production.

**HARVEST:** Use a sharp knife to sever the fruit from the plant. Harvest summer squashes, marrows and courgettes when the fruit is still quite small – marrows 25cm (10in) long, courgettes 10-12.5cm (4-5in).

For pumpkins, winter squashes and marrows for overwintering, let the fruit mature on the plant and remove before the first frost strikes.

## **Courgettes**

- **'Green Bush'** – Bush variety. Striped fruits. Pick as standard sized courgettes or leave to mature into marrows. **Available late April.**
- **'Atena'** – Produces a heavy crop of golden-yellow courgettes. Sweet flavour. **Available mid-May.**

## **Pumpkin**

- **'Jack O' Lantern'** – 4 – 7kg fruit of medium orange colour and sweet flavoured flesh. Perfect for Hallowe'en. **Available mid-May.**

## **Winter Squash**

- **'Hunter'** – Butternut squash developed for the UK market. Produces 6-7 fruits of 1kg each per plant. **Available late April.**

# Leeks

**SOIL:** Sunny, sheltered site in well-drained, fertile soil.

**CULTIVATION:** Make a hole with a dibber, 20cm deep, drop a seedling into each. Using a watering can, fill the hole with water and allow to soak away - this will draw enough soil over the plant to cover the roots and produce wonderful blanched stems as the leek grows. Plant 15cm apart.

Keep plants well-watered, especially during dry spells.

**HARVEST:** December to April.

- **'Musselburgh'** - Winter hardy with white stems. **Available May.**

**Lettuce** – All are ‘cut and come again’ varieties. This year we are selling them in a mixture of the different varieties. Available early May.

**SOIL:** Choose a sunny or lightly shaded site.

**CULTIVATION:** Grow 30cm apart and keep well-watered.

**HARVEST:** Pick outer leaves carefully and regularly, leaving the central foliage to develop for late pickings.

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| • <b>‘Matador’</b> – A red Lollo Rossa variety. Heavy and voluminous head with deeply cut intense red leaves. |
| • <b>‘Isira’</b> – Bright blonde oak-leaf variety. The head is voluminous, flat and compact.                  |
| • <b>‘Vizir’</b> – Bright green oak-leaf variety.   |

## **Legumes** -beans and peas

**SOIL:** Moist, fertile soil in a sheltered, sunny spot away from strong winds. Can also be grown in pots.

**CULTIVATION:** Before planting, create a support for climbing French and runner beans. Either make a wigwam with 2m (6ft) canes, lashed together with string at the top, or create a parallel row of canes, which have their tops tightly secured to a horizontal cane. Each row should be 60cm apart and canes spaced 15cm apart in the row.

For peas, broad, dwarf French beans, plant 10cm apart with shorter supports. Regular watering is vital. Runners should be watered particularly heavily in dry weather, both when the flower buds appear and when they open. Mulch around beans to help keep moisture in the soil when the conditions are dry.

**HARVEST:** Pick the beans and peas as soon as are ready and the plants will continue producing for several weeks.

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| • <b>Broad Bean ‘The Sutton’</b> - Dwarf variety, growing to 45cm in height. A good choice for exposed areas. Harvest: June – September.              |
| • <b>Climbing Dwarf French Bean ‘Cobra’</b> – Long, round stringless pods with black seeds. Quick to mature. Superb flavour. Harvest: July – October. |
| • <b>Dwarf French Bean ‘Dwarf Borlotto’</b> – Heavy crop of colourful beans. Pods are predominately red in colour. Harvest: July – October.           |
| • <b>Pea ‘Hurst Greenshaff’</b> - High yielding variety with 8-10 peas per pod. Height: 75cm. Harvest: May – September.                               |

# Cucumber

**SOIL:** A sunny spot protected from strong winds and well-drained soil.

**CULTIVATION:** Pinch out the growing tip when the plant has developed 6-7 leaves. Side shoots will then develop which can be left to trail over the ground or trained up stout netting and where the cucumbers will form. Keep the soil moist by watering around the plant, not on them. Once the first fruits start to swell, feed with a high potash liquid fertiliser. Fertilisation is essential so never remove the male flowers.

**HARVEST:** Cut the cucumbers when they are 15-20cm long. June to October if grown in the greenhouse or July to September outdoors.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>'Burpless Tasty Green'</b> – A favourite variety for outdoor production. Dark green medium to long fruits. Available early May.</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Lemon</b> – Lemon shaped fruits with light yellow skin and white flesh. Available early May.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>'Partner'</b> – High yield of medium to dark green fruits. Superb pickling variety. Available early May.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>'Peticue'</b> – Short, compact vining/bush variety. Pick fruits at 18 – 23cm for best tasting crunchy sweet cues. Regular harvest increases yield. Available early May.</li></ul> |

# Sweet Corn

**SOIL:** Full sun and away for strong wind.

**CULTIVATION:** Must be grown in a rectangular block 45cm apart to ensure wind pollination of the female flowers. Water well in dry weather.

**HARVEST:** Test for ripeness when the silks have turned chocolate brown. Pull back part of the sheath and squeeze a couple of grains between thumbnail and fingernail. If a watery liquid squirts out then the cob is unripe. If the liquid is creamy then the cob is just right for picking but if the liquid is thick and doughy you have waited too long!

Carefully twist off the ripe cob from the stem, ideally just before it is required for cooking.

**PESTS:** Squirrels eat the cobs – build a cage with canes and light netting / chicken wire around the plants including the top.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Golden Gate</b> – Cobs are 22cm in length and 18-20 rows of grains per cob. Exceptionally sweet flavour. Medium to tall plants. Available late May.</li></ul> |
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# Hot Peppers

**SOIL:** Sheltered, sunny position in moist, fertile soil or in containers. Can be grown indoors on a sunny windowsill and hand pollinated to ensure a good crop - simply move from flower to flower tickling the centre of each one with a fine paint brush

**CULTIVATION:** Water chilli pepper plants regularly throughout the growing season and feed weekly with a high potash tomato fertiliser once the first fruits have set. Pinch out the growing tip of the first flowering shoots to promote more branching and therefore increase your harvest. When growing chilli plants it's best to keep them a little on the dry side as stressing them very slightly helps to produce hotter peppers!

**HARVEST:** Chillies need warmth and long sunny days to ripen properly. Harvest chillies singly by cutting them from the plant. If grown outdoors they must be harvested before the first frosts. If your plants have a lot of flowers/unripe fruit in September, bring the pots indoors and let them ripen on a warm sunny windowsill. Hand pollinate the flowers to ensure fruit.

- **'Rocky'** – Jalapeno variety with long, slightly tapered fruits 7 – 9cm long that mature from green to red. Can be harvested when green or left to ripen to red. Hot, pungent flavour. Available late May.
- **'Red Flame'** – Elongated Cayenne type. Long, thin, wrinkled fruit 12.5cm long and 1.1cm in diameter. Young green fruit turn red when mature. Extremely hot. Available late May.

## Edible flowers

**Nasturtiums** - Great ornamental plant with edible leaves and flowers. Grow in sun or partial shade.

- **'Double Gleam Hybrids'** – Semi-double flowers for climbing up fences or trailing from baskets. Available mid-May.
- **'Jewel of Africa'** – Variegated foliage. Trailing type for baskets and containers. Available mid-May.
- **'Empress of India'** – Crimson-scarlet flowers over dark foliage. Compact type. Available mid-May.

**Pot Marigolds** – Orange edible flowers throughout the summer. Dead-head to prolong flowering. Bees love it! Available May.

**Pansies and Violas** – various varieties available throughout the year. Available May.