

Time for harvest

Timings are for the south. Crops will be 2 to 3 weeks later in the north.

VEGETABLES

SOW OUTDOORS

There are still quite a few seeds which can be sown. Try

- * lettuce (sow hardy variety e.g. winter density, for next spring)
- * japanese onions (sow seed to harvest early next summer)
- * parsley (protect from carrot root fly)
- * spring cabbage
- * chinese cabbage
- * endive
- * kohlrabi
- * winter radish
- * spinach
- * turnip

PLANT OUT OUTDOORS

- * savoy cabbage
- * kale

FRUIT TASKS

- * Keep fruit trees and canes well watered while their fruit is swelling.
- * Prune mature plum trees after fruiting. Remove and burn branches infected by silver leaf fungus (see over) cutting several inches past any stained wood. Prune broken or overcrowded branches.
- * Finish summer pruning apple trees.
- * Cut out old canes from raspberry plants after fruiting.
- * Summer prune gooseberries and redcurrants.
- * Plant new strawberry plants and remove those more than 3 years old. Cut leaves, and stalk of remaining plants to 1 inch from ground after fruiting. Runners can be used for propagation or discarded.
- * Support the weight of ripening melons with nets or old tights.
- * Support the branches of fruit trees heavily laden with fruit.



To receive Gardening Tips send your email address to roslynmckendry@pan-uk.org. These can also be downloaded free from our website at www.pan-uk.org/gardening.htm

STOP PRESS!!!!!! Aminopyralid suspended

In July we reported on a weedkiller, aminopyralid, which farmers use on grass to kill dock and other weeds. When cattle eat the grass the weedkiller passes through them into their manure. Growers using this manure as fertiliser have had crops ruined. Upon request from the manufacturer (Dow) the UK government has now temporarily suspended aminopyralid's sale and use. *Pesticides Safety Directorate. Regulatory Update 24 July, 2008.*

VEGETABLE HARVEST

Globe artichokes, aubergine, broad beans, french beans, runner beans, swiss chard, beetroot, calabrese broccoli, summer cabbage, peppers, cauliflower, cucumber, kohlrabi, lettuce, courgette, squash, onions, shallots, peas, potatoes (second earlies), radish, spinach, sweet corn, tomatoes, turnips.

FRUIT HARVEST

Apples, pears, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, gooseberries, peaches, apricots, cherries, melons, plums, redcurrants.

Diabetes link?

In February's 'tips' we reported on a study published in the *Lancet* which described a link between pesticides and diabetes. Here we describe another study which also reports such a link. This large-scale study was carried out in the United States and investigated the relationship between lifetime exposure to specific agricultural pesticides and diabetes incidence among pesticide applicators. A total of 33,457 licensed pesticide applicators were enrolled in the study between 1993 and 1997. Five years later follow-up interviews (conducted 1999-2003) revealed that 1,176 had developed diabetes while 30,611 had not. The authors found seven specific pesticides (aldrin, chlordane, heptachlor, dichlorvos, trichlorfon, alachlor, and cyanazine) which increased the incidence of diabetes. Applicators who had used the organochlorine insecticides aldrin, chlordane, and heptachlor for over 100 days had 51%, 63%, and 94% increased odds of diabetes, respectively. The observed association of organochlorine and organophosphate insecticides with diabetes is consistent with results from previous human and animal studies. Long-term exposure from handling certain pesticides, in particular, organochlorine and organophosphate insecticides, may be associated with increased risk of diabetes

Montgomery P, Kamel F, Saldana TM, Alavanja MCR and DP Sandler, Incident Diabetes and Pesticide Exposure among Licensed Pesticide Applicators: Agricultural Health Study, 1993-2003M. American Journal of Epidemiology 2008 167(10):1235-1246.

GENERAL TASKS

- * Pinch out the growing tips of tomatoes after fourth truss has set. Pinch out sideshoots. Continue to train cordon varieties and fertilise weekly.
- * Remember to thin seedlings sown earlier to the correct distance apart.
- * Water during dry spells and remember to top up the frog pond.
- * Keep on top of weeding and make sure no weeds go to seed.
- * Check the undersides of brassica leaves for eggs and caterpillars of the cabbage white butterfly. Squash them before they eat your cabbages.
- * Earth up potatoes to prevent any blight spores reaching the tubers.
- * Cut and dry herbs by hanging them upside down in a dry room. This way you will have plenty through the winter months.
- * Remove any carrots showing signs of carrot root fly attack.
- * Harvested onions should be left out to dry during dry periods.
- * Plant green manures on ground that becomes vacant. Rape and mustard sown in August can be dug into the soil in the autumn. Remember that these are brassica crops and may be susceptible to the same diseases as other brassicas.
- * Pinch off the growing tips of runner beans once they have reached the tops of their supports.
- * Broccoli require plenty of water when their heads are forming.
- * Celery require lots of water.

Cabbage white butterfly

The juvenile caterpillar stage of the cabbage white butterfly affects all varieties of brassicas, not just cabbages. They eat the leaves causing holes which increase in size as the leaves grow. The caterpillars are very common and are often found along with their excrement on home-grown or allotment-grown brassicas.

Two different species of cabbage white butterfly exist, the large cabbage white (*Pieris brassicae*) and the small cabbage white (*Pieris rapae*). They overwinter as pupae with adult butterflies emerging to mate in spring. Male butterflies have a single dark spot on their mid-wing while females have two spots.

The females lay yellowish eggs on the undersides of plants of the crucifer (mustard) family, particularly favouring cabbage and broccoli. Some other plants such as nasturtiums are also affected. The eggs hatch to give caterpillars which tend to stay on the undersides of leaves. Caterpillars of the large cabbage white are yellow with black markings. Their bodies are hairy and grow up to 40mm long feeding mainly on the outer leaves of brassicas. Caterpillars of the small cabbage white are pale green and grow up to 25mm long preferring to eat the inner leaves.

Both species have two generations each year with caterpillars occurring from spring to early autumn. The caterpillars pupate on the host plant or on nearby fences, walls etc.

The most effective ways to reduce damage from cabbage whites is to

- * Regularly monitor the undersides of the leaves of brassica plants picking off and crushing eggs and young caterpillars
- * Cover brassica beds with horticultural fleece
- * Sprays made from the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*. are effective but are not currently available to UK gardeners.

Other caterpillars can also damage brassica plants. In particular, damage from caterpillars of the cabbage moth (*Mamestra brassica*) is common.



large cabbage white butterfly



caterpillar of large cabbage white



eggs of large cabbage white

Silver leaf fungus

Plums (and other stone fruit) are susceptible to attack by the fungus *Chondrostereum purpureum* (*Stereum purpureum*). The fungus enters through open wounds caused by pruning or damage to branches. Once the fungus enters the tree a toxin enters its vascular system staining the wood brown and causing leaves to turn pale and silvery.

In summertime, spores of this fungus are generally dormant and trees more able to resist attack. So it is good to prune your plum trees in the summer after you have harvested your plums.



**PESTICIDE
ACTION
NETWORK UK**

Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK) is an independent non-profit organisation working nationally and globally with individuals and organisations who share our concerns. PAN UK projects enable us to work effectively towards specific targets to enable us to:

- ❖ Eliminate the hazards of pesticides
- ❖ Reduce dependence on pesticides
- ❖ Promote alternatives to pesticides

To receive monthly gardening tips send email address to:

Roslyn McKendry
Pesticide Action Network UK
Development House
56-64 Leonard Street,
London EC2A 4JX, UK.
tel: +44 (0)20 7065 0905
fax: +44 (0)20 7065 0907
roslynmckendry@pan-uk.org
http: //www.pan-uk.org