

Time for harvest

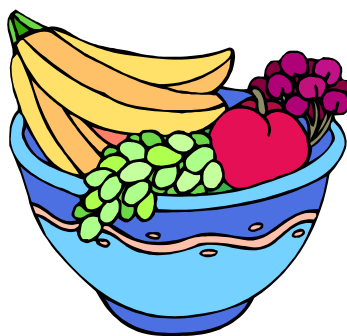
VEGETABLES

SOW OUTDOORS

- * spring cabbage (to harvest next spring)
- * chicory (non-forcing varieties, e.g. sugar loaf)
- * chinese cabbage
- * endive
- * kohlrabi
- * lettuce
- * parsley
- * peas
- * radish
- * turnip
- * french beans
- * beetroot
- * carrot

PLANT OUT OUTDOORS

- * broccoli/calabrese
- * cauliflower
- * kale
- * leek
- * cabbage (winter and savoy)



FRUIT

- * A lot of cane fruit will ripen this month. Keep berries well-watered while they are swelling.
- * Apple trees can be summer pruned in July.
- * Summer prune red currants, white currants and gooseberries. Sideshoots which are this year growth should be pruned to 3 or 4 buds. Shoots which are crossing or growing in the middle of the bush should be cut out.
- * Summer-fruiting raspberries should be pruned after the fruit has been picked. Old canes should be untied from supporting wires and cut out down to ground level. This year's canes should be tied to the wire supports.

HARVEST

VEGETABLES - globe artichokes, broad beans, french beans, some early runner beans, swiss chard, perpetual spinach, beetroot, summer cabbage, carrot, cauliflower (summer varieties), greenhouse cucumber, kohlrabi, lettuce, courgette and other summer squash, onions, shallots, garlic, peas, potatoes (first earlies), radish, spinach and the first greenhouse tomatoes.

FRUIT - blackcurrants, gooseberries, rhubarb, some strawberry varieties, summer-fruiting raspberries, red currants, cherries, peaches.



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Eradicoat - a new organic option for gardeners

A new product, Eradicoat, is on sale this year and is a promising new tool for controlling pest insects. Insects breathe through holes in their body called spiracles and Eradicoat, sprayed on an infestation, acts by blocking these. It is effective against aphids, red spider mite, whitefly, thrips, leafhopper, mealybug and scale insect. It only kills insects that come into direct contact with it before it dries out. So although, Eradicoat can also potentially kill beneficial insects it should be possible to minimise this damage by carefully targetting Eradicoat to the area of an infestation.

Eradicoat is made from plant extracts and can be used by organic gardeners. It is safe to use on fruit and vegetables. This product has been available to commercial vegetable growers for several years but is now available to gardeners. It can be bought from Defenders (tel - 01233 813121).

GENERAL TASKS

- * July is usually one of the driest months so mulch beds with organic matter to preserve moisture. This is particularly important for new plantings which don't have extensive root networks.
- * Pinch out sideshoots of tomatoes and also their growing tips after the fourth truss has set. This will force the plants to focus on ripening tomatoes before the weather turns cold.
- * Fertilise tomato plants weekly and keep them well-watered throughout the growing season. Dryness around the roots prevents tomato plants from taking up sufficient calcium and can cause blossom end rot.
- * Fertilise onions and keep them well weeded; plants in the onion family (alliums) don't compete well with weeds.
- * Check the undersides of brassica leaves for the eggs or caterpillars of the cabbage white butterfly. Squash any you find before they eat your cabbages.
- * Protect carrot sowings from carrot rootfly (see March 2004 Tips).
- * Protect potatoes from blight by covering soil with a thick mulch.
- * The greenhouse may get too hot in July so remember to open doors on hot days. You may also need to hang shade cloth over the sunny side of the greenhouse.
- * Keep weeding and make sure no weeds go to seed.
- * Protect summer cauliflowers by bending them over the flower heads to prevent them from opening up too early.
- * Pinch out the tops of climbing beans once they reach the tops of their supports. The plants will develop more sideshoots and more beans should be produced.
- * Water runner beans well to encourage the flowers to set.

Pea and bean weevil (or pea leaf weevil)

The tell-tale sign of attack by pea and bean weevils are U-shaped notches around the leaf margins of peas, broad beans and other leguminous plants. This damage is caused by the adult of the pea and bean weevil (*Sitona lineatus*).

Adult pea and bean weevils are small greyish-brown beetles about 5 mm long with a typical weevil snout. They overwinter in leaf litter, other organic debris, or among leguminous plants. In early spring the females lay eggs in the soil around pea and bean plants. The larvae, which hatch two weeks later, are white with a brown head, legless and live in the soil feeding on root nodules. The larvae cause more serious damage than the adults and can actually kill seedlings. Heavy infestations can also reduce yields, and reduce the protein content of peas and beans. However, this is not often a problem and for the most part older plants are not affected significantly.

After feeding for about a month the larvae pupate in the soil. This is usually around the end of June. Adults emerge after two or three weeks. If pea or bean plants have already been harvested adult weevils will move around to find other suitable plants to feed on. When the temperature drops in the autumn they will look for winter shelter.

Damage to adult plants is not generally severe especially if the plants are strong. However, it should be possible to keep populations of pea and bean weevil low by

- * Placing a fleece barrier over pea or bean beds immediately after sowing to keep the adult weevils away.
- * Pea and bean weevils feed off other leguminous plants such as clover, vetch or tares. There is a danger that such plants will provide an attractive place for the weevils to hibernate if grown over winter as a green manure crop. According to the Henry Doubleday Research Association clover is the least attractive so might be the best choice if you have these weevils on your plot. Alternatively, you could plant a non-leguminous green manure crop.



PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK UK

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

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