

Time for harvest

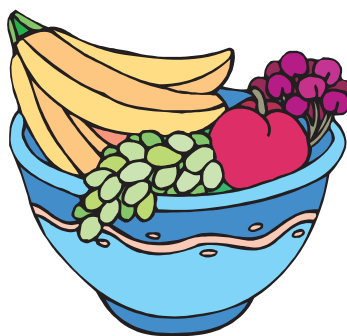
VEGETABLES

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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Garlic - protects against more than vampires

We are all aware of the powerful smell of garlic. But what of its effect on pests?

In the UK garlic granules and sprays are sold to both commercial growers and to gardeners. Applied around plants these products apparently encourage growth. A ring of granules around susceptible plants forms a barrier deterring slugs and snails.

However, some research suggests that garlic may be effective in controlling other pests. In Ireland and Denmark garlic sprays are now licensed to control aphids (particularly mealy aphids) and to kill the eggs of cabbage and carrot root fly. The manufacturers are currently applying for a similar license for the UK. Derived from garlic cloves these products are likely become a useful tool to the organic gardener.

Garlic granules and sprays can be purchased from mail order companies such as Green Gardener (01394 420087) and Just Green (01621 785088).

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 April 2006 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.



Asparagus beetle

These beetles (*Crioceris asparagi*) eat both the leaves and bark of asparagus plants. If the damage to the bark extends all the way around the stem the plant will dry up and turn brown above the damaged area.

Adult asparagus beetles are 6-8 mm long and are black/blue with six yellow spots on their wing cases. The adults can survive over winter emerging from the soil in May and June to lay black eggs on asparagus spears and foliage. Eggs are laid singly or in groups of three to eight. They hatch into grey larvae which have three sets of legs towards the head end. The larvae can grow to 10 mm in length and after about 15 days migrate down to the soil to pupate.

Both the larvae and adult insects do damage to asparagus plants. The principal damage is due to the loss of leaves which reduces the plants ability to photosynthesise. There are two generations between May and September. They only affect asparagus plants.

To reduce the chance of an infestation

- * Burn old stems at the end of the year to destroy any overwintering beetles.
- * Pick insects and larvae off asparagus plants from late spring onwards.



PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK UK

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- ❖ 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
Eurolink Centre
49 Eifra Road,
London SW2 1BZ, UK.
tel: +44 (0)20 7274 8895
fax: +44 (0)20 7274 9084
roslynmckendry@pan-uk.org
http://www.pan-uk.org