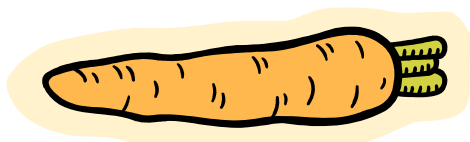


May in the allotment

VEGETABLES

SOW OUTDOORS

- * French beans (sow main crop in May with subsequent sowings to the end of June to harvest until the end of October)
- * Runner beans
- * Beetroot
- * Broccoli
- * Winter cabbage
- * Savoy cabbage
- * Calabrese
- * Carrots (intermediate or long-rooted varieties)
- * Cauliflower e.g autumn giant
 - ❖ sow autumn varieties to harvest in Autumn
 - ❖ sow winter varieties to harvest next spring
- * Chicory (forcing varieties)
- * Kale
- * Kohlrabi
- * Lettuce, endive
- * Courgette, marrow, pumpkin can be sown outside in late May
- * Peas
- * Radish
- * Spinach (summer varieties e.g. King of Denmark)
- * Spring onions
- * Swede
- * Turnip (early varieties e.g. Purple-top Milan)



SUCCESSIONAL SOWINGS

Many vegetables can be sown over a period of several months. They should be resown at regular intervals to ensure a constant supply of fresh produce. These include beetroot, french beans, carrots, peas, lettuce, endive, radish, spinach and turnip.

SOW UNDER COVER

- * Sweetcorn

PLANT OUT OUTDOORS

- * Brussels sprouts
- * Summer cabbage
- * Red cabbage
- * Celery and celeriac
- * Leeks

PLANT OUT IN GREENHOUSE

- * Aubergine
- * Peppers
- * Tomatoes
- * Cucumber (greenhouse varieties)



To receive *Gardening Tips* send your email address to roslynmckendry@pan-uk.org

The death of strychnine

Few of us will ever see a mole yet many will see the small mounds of earth left as these elusive animals tunnel under the ground catching worms and insects. Some find mole hills unsightly and go to great lengths to stop moles. Up to now professional pest controllers have been allowed to use strychnine to control moles, a chemical which causes a slow and agonizing death, and potentially puts other animals at risk.

However, change is afoot. An EU directive is currently reviewing all chemicals used to control pests to ensure they are safe to use and do not harm the environment. The manufacturers of strychnine have failed to provide such evidence, and so, from 1 September it will no longer be legal to use.

One serious concern remains and that is that those wanting to kill moles will resort to using a 'kill trap'. Although well-designed and properly-used traps cause much less suffering than strychnine, many mole-catchers fear an increase in the use of poor quality traps by untrained operators. At present regulations for mole traps are limited. Some lobbying work is now trying to encourage government to improve regulation and guidance.

But hopefully the changes will cause landowners to question their need to kill moles. Although mole tunnels can be a serious hazard in some circumstances most of the time they are not. And moles can actually be gardener's friends. They eat slugs and many harmful insect larvae such as cockchafer and carrotfly. Their tunnels also help to drain and aerate heavy soils and the fine soil of molehills was traditionally used to make potting compost.

FRUIT

- * Put up codling moth traps to prevent codling moths from mating and laying eggs in your apples
- * Birds love to eat soft fruit so prepare nets or fruit cages to put round fruit bushes
- * Pull out unwanted raspberry shoots to prevent canes becoming too dense
- * Strawberries planted late should not be allowed to flower in the first year so pick off any developing flowers

OTHER TASKS

- * Propagate perennial herbs by taking cuttings
- * Horsetail, bindweed, dandelions and other perennial weeds are grow furiously. Ideally dig out their roots. At least make sure they do not set seed and spread.
- * Keep mowing the grass every week
- * Sow new grass before the weather gets too hot
- * Pinch off tops of broad beans to discourage blackfly which love the succulent tips
- * Cover carrot plantings with fleece to keep carrot root fly away

Flea beetles

These are small (2-3 mm in length) dark shiny beetles which jump like fleas and are sometimes striped. They are members of the Chrysomelidae family and are pests of Brassicas crops, such as cabbages, kale, radish, and mustard. The adults overwinter in long grass or plant debris and lay eggs in soil near vulnerable plants in May/June. The larvae often eat leaves and, after hatching, the adult eats leaves too giving them a characteristic lacey appearance. Flea beetles are most active in dry weather. They can be quite damaging to young seedlings but cause mainly cosmetic damage to older plants. Adults hibernate over the winter and will live until the following summer.



Photo: ForestryImages.org

To prevent or reduce damage from flea beetles

- * Encourage rapid growth by making sure young seedlings are healthy when planted out, are grown in fertile soil, and are not stressed for water.
- * Young seedlings are most vulnerable when stressed for water so water regularly until the seedlings are well established.
- * Cover seedlings with horticultural fleece immediately after planting. Some suggest stretching old tights over cabbages!
- * Yellow sticky traps will catch a lot of jumping beetles.
- * Diatomaceous earth can be sprinkled around sensitive plants to reduce the population of flea beetles.
- * Radishes are apparently the crop of choice for the discerning flea beetle so one of two rows can be planted as a trap crop to distract the beetles from more precious crops.
- * Removing or incorporating crop debris over winter can reduce places for adults to hibernate reducing next year population.

Harvest

Radish, asparagus, rhubarb, spinach, peas, lettuce, leek, kale, winter cauliflower, spring cabbage, sprouting broccoli, chard.



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

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