

# May in the allotment

## VEGETABLES

### SOW OUTDOORS

- \* Runner beans
- \* French beans  
(sow main crop in May with subsequent sowings to the end of June to harvest until the end of October)
- \* 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



To receive Gardening Tips send your email address to [roslynmckendry@pan-uk.org](mailto:roslynmckendry@pan-uk.org)

### Parkinson's link?

More than one in 300 people in the UK and US will develop Parkinson's disease. Yet the causes are far from clear. Those who have suffered head injuries are at increased risk but this is not the full story. At a recent conference in California researchers weighed up several lines of evidence all pointing to the same conclusion, that exposure to certain pesticides increases the risk of Parkinson's.

Finding links between pesticides and Parkinson's has been difficult due to the length of time between exposure and development of the disease. However, an increasing number of studies now indicate that farm workers exposed to the weedkiller, paraquat, or certain other pesticides, are twice or three times as likely to develop the disease.

In addition, other studies are suggesting how pesticides could be having this effect. Cells in a part of the brain called the substantia nigra produce a chemical called dopamine which is involved in movement. In patients with Parkinson's disease these cells die. Laboratory animals exposed to paraquat had high levels of a protein called alpha-synuclein in their brains. Another study showed that build-up of this protein kills the same cells in the brain that are destroyed in patients with Parkinson's. The researchers suggest that exposure to pesticides such as paraquat alone may not be enough to develop the disease but may increase the probability.

Paraquat is no longer available for home gardeners in the UK but is still available for professionals such as farmers and parks workers. It is also still widely used in developing countries where many die of paraquat poisoning every year.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/scienceNews/idUKN2222543520070423?feedType=RSS&pageNumber=1>

- \* Tomatoes
- \* Cucumber (greenhouse varieties)

## HARVEST

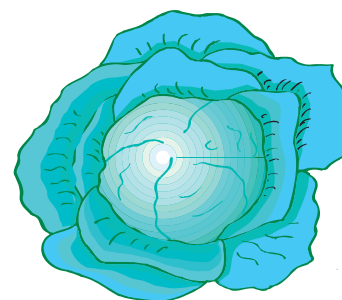
Radish, asparagus, rhubarb, spinach, peas, lettuce, leek, kale, winter cauliflower, spring cabbage, sprouting broccoli, chard.

## 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



### Cabbage Root Fly

The cabbage root fly, *Delia radicum*, is found all over Europe. They are 0.5-1cm long, grey, and resemble common houseflies. As the weather warms up in spring the flies hatch from over-wintering pupae in the soil. The flies feed on nectar and lay small white eggs (1mm in diameter) near the surface of soil next to brassica plants. After about 6 days eggs hatch producing white maggots which eat the finer roots of brassica plants and which may tunnel into their main stem. Larvae feed for about 3 weeks and when fully fed may be around 0.9-1cm in length. Fully-grown larvae form reddish brown pupae in the soil. These hatch into the adult flies after another 20 days. Around three generations of eggs may be laid each year between mid-spring and early autumn. The generations overlap resulting in the continuous presence of flies.

The larvae of the cabbage root fly attack cauliflowers, broccoli, brussels sprouts, spring and autumn cabbage, savoy cabbage and kale. They may also burrow into radish, swede and turnip. Affected plants tend to grow more slowly and may wilt on sunny days. Adult plants survive attack quite well but young transplants are vulnerable and may be killed.

To prevent attack by cabbage root flies

- \* Place squares of cardboard, roofing felt, or carpet around the stems of newly transplanted brassica seedlings. Make a cut from the edge of the square (10cm diameter) into the centre. Then place the square around the transplant such that soil around the young brassica plant is covered. Flies lay eggs on the squares instead of the soil. Exposed eggs dry up and die.
- \* Completely cover beds with horticultural fleece to prevent the flies laying eggs near plants.
- \* Encourage populations of predatory beetles as these eat cabbage root fly larvae.



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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