



# autumn leaves falling.....

## VEGETABLES

### Sow outside

Sow broad beans now for an early spring crop. Sow winter hardy varieties of lettuce, e.g. winter density, and some oriental greens, e.g. mizuna, pak choi, green-in-snow, giant red mustard, and mibuna.

### Plant outside

Plant spring cabbage, garlic, onion sets (overwintering or 'japanese' varieties), kale var. hungry gap.

## FRUIT

- \* Plant rhubarb crowns
- \* Prune summer-fruiting raspberries. Cut down canes which have just fruited, and tie the best unfruited canes to supports.
- \* Prepare the ground for planting fruit bushes and trees. These are planted during winter months but it is easier to prepare the ground before it is too wet and heavy to dig.
- \* Order new fruit trees.
- \* Propagate blackcurrants, red and white currants and gooseberries. Remove a 30 cm (12 ins) shoot just above a bud on the parent plant. Discard the top 5 cm (2 ins). Plant the cutting to two thirds of its depth.
- \* Fix grease bands to apple and pear trees to prevent pests such as winter moth from crawling up the trunks.

### Vegetable Harvest

Jerusalem artichokes, aubergine, sweet potato, french beans, runner beans, swiss chard, beetroot, calabrese broccoli, brussels sprouts, summer cabbage, red cabbage, savoy cabbage, peppers, carrots, cauliflower, celeriac, celery, chicory (non-forcing varieties), cucumber, endive, kohlrabi, leeks (early varieties), lettuce, courgettes, squash, pumpkins, peas, potatoes (maincrop), radish, salsify, scorzonera, spinach, swede, tomatoes, turnips.

### Fruit Harvest

Apples, pears, autumn-fruiting raspberries, melons, grapes.

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## Pesticide residues - the hidden extras

Pesticides are present in many of the foods that we regularly eat, but we can't see or taste them and so they are hard to avoid. Surveys of consumers regularly show that most people would prefer to eat food without pesticide residues. But how do we know which foods are likely to have the most pesticides on them?

PAN UK has looked at government testing data to identify which foods contain the most pesticide residues. Have a look at the results on PAN UK's website at [www.pan-uk.org/Projects/Food/](http://www.pan-uk.org/Projects/Food/) The ten worst offenders were flour, potatoes, bread, apples, pears, grapes, strawberries, tomatoes, cucumber and green beans. The website also shows which pesticides were found, how frequently, and what potential health effects they may have. There is also advice on what to do.

**Don't** stop eating your 5 portions a day of fruit and veg, but **do**

- ◆ Grow your own fruit and veg
- ◆ Consider replacing those items on the top ten list with organic
- ◆ Increase your consumption of the fruit and veg least likely to contain residues
- ◆ Make your concerns know to your local supermarket

[www.pan-uk.org/Projects/Food/](http://www.pan-uk.org/Projects/Food/)

## GENERAL TASKS

- \* Lift maincrop potatoes two weeks after the tops have died or been cut down. Make sure the potatoes are dry before storage.
- \* Earth up celery to blanch the stems making them more tender.
- \* Save seed from open-pollinated varieties.
- \* Dig over vacant ground and incorporate manure so it has time to break down by planting time next spring. Green manure crops planted at the end of summer can be dug into the soil now. In milder parts of the country there may still be time to plant an over-wintering green manure (see Sept 2004 tips).
- \* Prepare a container for making leaf mould. Trace a square on the ground (2 ft x 2 ft) and hammer a wooden post into each corner. Wrap chicken wire around the sides attaching it to the posts. Fallen leaves can be stored in this container. After 18 months or two years they will have broken down into leaf mould, an excellent supplement for the soil.
- \* Cover compost bins to keep the rain out and heat in.
- \* Reduce ventilation in the greenhouse.
- \* Insulate the greenhouse and worm bin ... try bubble wrap.
- \* Place water butts to collect rain water from roofs of sheds.
- \* Remove yellowing leaves from winter brassicas. These are not useful to the plant and will encourage Botrytis to develop.
- \* Beds you want to dig in early spring can be covered with plastic sheeting. This will keep the rain off allowing you to dig earlier.
- \* Finish planting spring flowering bulbs.



### Winter moth

Winter moths (*Operophtera brumata*) are grayish brown and about 10 mm long with 25 mm wingspans. They survive through the summer and autumn as pupae in the soil with the adult moths emerging between November and January. The wingless females climb the trunk of fruit trees (and other deciduous trees) to mate and lay eggs. The eggs hatch into pale green caterpillars which have paler lines running down their bodies. These may reach 25mm in length. They move with a characteristic looping action due to the fact that they only have two pairs of clasping legs on their abdomen. From late March the caterpillars feed off tree leaves, completing their feeding by early June when they drop down to the soil to pupate.

Damaged tree leaves initially have small holes and are loosely bound with silk threads. Damage becomes more noticeable in mid-summer when the leaves are fully expanded and the holes have enlarged due to leaf growth. Blossom and developing fruitlets can also be damaged. At least two other moths, the mottled umber moth (*Erannis defoliaria*), and the March moth (*Alsophila aescularia*) have wingless females with a similar lifestyle but the winter moth is most significant as a garden pest.

Although significant commercial losses have been recorded trees can tolerate some leaf loss. In fact, established trees can lose up to 25% of their leaves and still bounce back. However, it is more important to protect young trees.

Winter moth damage can be reduced by taking a few relatively easy precautions.

- ◆ Grease bands should be placed around the trunks of fruit trees before the adults begin to emerge in November (don't forget to place them around tree stakes too). These should be about 45cm (18in) above soil level and will trap the females as they climb. Winter moth activity declines after January but some species with wingless females are active until April, so grease may need to be reapplied from time to time. Ready-prepared sticky papers can be used on smooth barked trees while a ring of grease can be applied directly to trees with fissured bark. Both products are available from many garden centres or by mail order from companies such as The Organic Gardening Catalogue (0845 130 1304), Agralan (01285 860015) and Growing Success Organics Ltd (01722 337744).
- ◆ From November through January in the evenings you may find the wingless females with a cloud of male moths around them. Remove any you find.
- ◆ Look inside buds and leaf clusters for eggs or caterpillars and crush any you find.



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  
 Tel: 020 7065 0905 Direct 020 7065 0912  
 Fax: 020 7065 0907  
 roslynmckendry@pan-uk.org  
 http://www.pan-uk.org