

JULY

A month of harvests!

- SOW** kale, winter cabbage, spinach, fennel, carrots.
More successional sowing of peas, dwarf beans, carrots and salads
- FEED** tomatoes, cucumbers, aubergines and peppers WEEKLY
- PICK** vegetables and salads, as well as herbs to prevent the leaves getting too old.

Picking when small and young are the times of peak flavour and tenderness. However, this does not apply to some vegetables, mainly root vegetables, where flavour does not reduce with size. It is essential that soft salad vegetables and fruit are picked regularly as just a few ripe fruits or pods left on the plant can bring cropping to an end.

- PROTECT** brassicas with fine netting or horticultural fleece, pinning in place. Butterflies will be busy laying eggs on your greens plants as food for their caterpillars!

- THIN** fruits of apples and pears to a maximum of three fruit per cluster. Also, thin vegetable seedlings sown earlier before they can compete with each other.

MAINTENANCE Deadhead flowers, tie-in climbers, watch out for pests and diseases, aphids and caterpillars.

GARDENING GUIDANCE

- Leave grass on lawn to grow taller in hot weather.
- Water first or last thing in the day.
- Clear weeds – do not allow them to flower or you will have lots more.

JUNIORS' JOBS FOR JULY

Now's the time to sow as many seeds as you can, both outside and indoors. When the seeds have germinated, you can pot them up and give them to friends to use in their own garden or pots. **But what if you run out of pots? Well, make your own!**

- Collect as much newspaper as you can – often there are free newspapers delivered to your home that you can collect or other people may be glad to get rid of the pile they have.
- Once you have the supply of paper, find a small jar or can. The size of the jar or can will determine the size of your pot, so you may want a range of them so you can make small, medium and larger pots. Just a word of warning – if you use a

can, cover the top, open edge with sticky tape to cover the edge because it will be very sharp and you may get a bad cut.

- Take a sheet of newspaper and fold it almost in half lengthways, leaving a strip about 3cm in width at the top
- Now, fold that 3cm strip down, just as you would when closing an envelope.
- Now take the jar or can, lie it on its side on short edge of the paper with the open top facing up to the flap you have just made. Make sure the jar or can is hanging over the bottom edge of the newspaper a little way – you will see why in a moment!
- Roll the paper as tightly as you can around the jar or can until you reach the end of the paper.
- Fold the paper strip into the top of the jar or can so it's neat and flat.
- Turn the jar or can upside down and tap it on the table so the bottom is as flat as possible. Now, remove the can or jar from your cylinder – leaving the jar or can sticking out means you can grab it more easily and gently remove it.
- Now you have a pot!

Stand your pots up in a tray and then fill them with compost. The paper will get a bit soggy but that is to be expected – and why they should be left in the tray. You can now sow seeds into the compost or transplant your seedlings into them before passing them on to your friends.

When you plant the seedlings or plants into the ground, don't remove them from the pot – plant the whole thing and the paper will gradually rot in just a few weeks, leaving your plants to grow and flourish.