

**"What dreadful hot weather we have!
It keeps me in a continual state of inelegance."
Jane Austen.**

**"Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability."
Sam Keen.**

NOTES FOR AUGUST

JOBS TO BE DONE/THINGS TO LOOK AT - SOWING AND PLANTING GUIDE

VEGETABLE	SOW/PLANT	NOTES
Asparagus		Stake ferns in exposed locations – they are needed to feed the crowns that will in turn produce next year's crop.
Artichokes - Globe		Harvest from July to September. Pick when they have swelled up but not opened.
Aubergines		Watch for greenfly. Water well and feed with high potash feed every two weeks once the fruits are forming. Pick whilst young and shiny- Limit to about 5 to 6 fruits for best results.
Beans Broad		Finish harvesting. Consider leaving the roots in the ground, they have rich Nitrogen fixing nodules on the roots.
Beans French Climbing		Regular picking is very important. Do not allow the soil to dry out.
Beans French Dwarf		Regular picking is very important for all the Bean family to ensure they keep cropping.
Beans Runner		Do not allow the soil to dry out. In very hot dry weather flowers can shrivel without forming beans, a light spray of water can help. Regular picking is very important, if there are flowers the more you pick the more beans the plant will try to produce.
Beans Borlotti & other beans grown for seeds.	Leave to dry naturally on plant	Keep moist until mature. They will start to turn a yellow-brown colour as the Beans Ripen. You may have to harvest before the beans are completely dry if very damp weather threatens to rot your crop. Don't shell until completely dry.
Beetroot		Can be left to grow on into early winter. Thin out previous sowings if needed. Allowing the soil to dry out can cause the plant to bolt.
Broccoli – Sprouting A mass of small separate florets on a long stem.	Plant out any Remaining plants.	Check for any signs of pest problems. Deal with them quickly when discovered. Caterpillars, whitefly & mealy aphids are about now. Cut rather than break when harvesting.
Broccoli Calabrese Cauliflower like heads		Check for any signs of pest problems. Deal with them quickly when discovered. Caterpillars, whitefly & mealy aphids are about now.
Brussels Sprouts		Ensure firmly planted, may need supporting. Earth up a little if required & keep weed free. Check for pests and caterpillars, Remove any yellow leaves.
Cabbage Spring Summer sown normally to overwinter Harvest April – May	Sow now to Harvest next March or April.	Start off in pots or in a seedbed. Check for any signs of pest problems. Deal with them quickly when discovered. For good cabbages next year they need to be well enough established to survive the winter frost, but not too large or they may bolt. Sow some over a period of weeks to get some plants in ideal condition to plant out.
Cabbage Summer & Autumn. Sown under glass in Feb or in seedbed March/April Harvest Aug – Oct	Harvest	Some pointed cabbages like Hispi can be sown from Jan to June & harvested from May to October. Check for any signs of pest problems. Deal with them quickly when discovered. Caterpillars, whitefly & mealy aphids are about now. Once Summer cabbages have a solid heart they may be harvested.

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Cabbage Red Harvest Aug – Oct	Harvest	Most Red Cabbages store very well Check for any signs of pest problems. Deal with them quickly when discovered. Caterpillars, whitefly & mealy aphids are about now.
Cabbage Winter/Savoy Harvest Nov - Feb	Plant early August if not already in the ground.	Some varieties have extended harvesting dates or mature quickly. Check for any signs of pest problems. Deal with them quickly when discovered. Caterpillars, whitefly & mealy aphids are about now.
Carrots	Still time to sow on last crop of fast-growing carrots like Amsterdam forcing.	Harvest. - Do not forget to thin out previous sowings – doing this job late in the day is supposed to help reduce the risk of carrot fly problems. Sow final crop at the start of August. Carrot flies are laying eggs again this month.
Cauliflower Spring/Early Summer.		To Harvest May to Aug. Keep the heads white by using the outer leaves to protect them from the sun.
Cauliflower Summer/Autumn.		To Harvest Aug to Nov Look for pests and deal with them quickly on all Cauliflowers.
Cauliflower Winter.	Plant out	To Harvest Jan to April. Consider using a collar around the base to stop cabbage root fly.
Celery	Plant out/thin	Harvest Aug to Nov. Keep well-watered to stop celery becoming stringy. Blanch stems as required. Watch out for slugs.
Celeriac	Plant out/thin	Harvest Sep to Mar. Keep well-watered. Try it in a salad grated raw with a mustard flavoured Mayonnaise.
Chicory	Sow	Harvest young leaves if ready.
Chillies Most chillies become hotter as they ripen.	Like sunshine, warmth & a bit of water.	Too much Nitrogen can mean lots of leaf and few chillies. Watch out for greenfly. Keep moist and feed with high potash feed every two weeks once the fruits are forming.
Chinese Cabbage	Sow	12-16 Weeks to Harvest. Once slugs and snails set up home, they will slowly eat out the centre of the plant.
Courgettes		Harvest regularly. These are hungry plants that benefit from a regular liquid feed. Keep moist rather than wet to stop root tip rot, especially when in flower. Best picked when they are small (4-5 ins/10/12 cm), they can grow very quickly , leave them and your courgettes quickly look like marrows and taste rather watery. Watch out for slugs & snails.
Cucumbers Ridge & Greenhouse	Compost any Cues that have turned yellow. They will delay the plant producing new fruits	These are hungry plants that benefit for a regular liquid feed. Check supports on indoor and outdoor cucumbers (if used). Apply extra compost around the base of the plant Cucumbers like to be moist not waterlogged. Remember to check if you need to remove Male Flowers for your chosen variety. Watch out for powdery mildew.
Endive	Sow	Great addition to a winter salad bowl. Will need to be Blanched to mellow it slightly bitter flavour. Watch out for slugs & snails.
Florence Fennel		Late Summer Variety - Keep well-watered, it is prone to bolting in hot dry weather.
Garlic		Lift and dry well before storing.
Kale	Plant out any remaining	Harvest Nov to April – Able to survive very cold weather.
Kohl Rabi	Sow	Harvest earlier sowings. Great in late season salads Don't forget to thin out previous sowings
Leeks		Watch out for leek moth caterpillars.
Lettuce Butterhead – Cos – Loose leaf Crisp head - Romaine – Winter.	Sow Early in August Plant Out	Harvest early sowings - Keep well-watered. - Do not sow lettuce on really hot days; the seeds do not germinate well (at all) in hot conditions. Thin out previously planted seeds if required.
Lettuce Lambs (Corn Salad – Mache)		Salad leaves – water regularly. Can be sown in full sun or partial shade. Grows quickly and will normally need thinning out.
Marrow		These are hungry plants that thrive on manure & compost. Raise large marrows off the ground to reduce the risk of them rotting.
Melon		Keep moist not wet
Mizuna	Sow on a regular basis until September	Harvest – A cut and come again vegetable - fast growing. Great in Salads or stir-fry. Peppery, mustard taste.
Onions Spring	Finish sowing Summer Varieties.	Harvest – Thin out any earlier sowings if needed. About time to switch to sowing White Winter Lisbon - Weed and water regularly if conditions are dry.

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Onions	Sow Overwintering Onions mid-August.	Weed regularly – Water in very dry weather but do not overwater it encourage rot. Cut off any flower buds as soon as they appear. Harvest when the tops turn brown and die down. Use any Onions with a thick neck first, they will not store well. Dry off well before storage.
Pak Choi	Sow	Should grow very quickly in this warm weather - Harvest
Parsnip		Do not forget to thin out previous sowings. Keep free from weeds.
Peas Maincrop		Harvest. Consider leaving the roots in the ground, they have rich Nitrogen fixing nodules on the roots. Late sown Peas will need to be kept moist, water watered if we have little rain! They should be ready to eat in late September. Watch for mildew.
Peas Mangetout		Harvest. Consider leaving the roots in the ground, they have rich Nitrogen fixing nodules on the roots.
Peas Sugar snap		Harvest. Consider leaving the roots in the ground, they have rich Nitrogen fixing nodules on the roots.
Peppers Sweet or Bell Most peppers become sweeter as they ripen.	Like sunshine, warmth & water.	Too much Nitrogen can mean lots of leaf and few peppers Watch out for greenfly. Keep moist and feed with high potash feed every two weeks once the fruits are forming.
Potatoes Second Early & salad Potatoes.		Check and harvest if ready – Watch out for signs of Potato Blight. Allow to dry off in the sun before storing for a few hours turning once.
Potatoes Main Crop		Earth up again if needed. – Watch for signs of Potato Blight and slugs.
Pumpkin & Winter Squash		Watch out for slugs. Check that the pumpkins are setting, if not try hand pollination of the flowers. Use the long stem male flowers to pollinate the shorter stem/swollen female flowers. In wet weather lift off the soil onto bricks, wood, slate etc. to stop the rotting. Feed with high Potash Tomato fertilizer or your own special (secret) mix.
Radishes	Sow Summer & Winter varieties	Harvest 5 – 8 weeks after sowing. Do not sow on recently manured ground, or in very hot weather. Thin out early sowings if needed. It is time to sow winter radish now.
Rhubarb		July normally marks the end of harvest time; the plant needs to recover now – Remove any flower spikes if they form – Do not let them to go to seed. Give a feed of General-purpose fertilizer around the crowns.
Rocket Salad & Wild	Sow	Adds a bit of bite to a summer salad. Use the young leaves. Salad Rocket has wider leaves and a milder taste. Wild is less prone to bolting and lasts into autumn or early winter
Salad Leaves	Sow	Cut and come again 3 or 4 times. Avoid sowing in very hot weather.
Shallots		Should be ready for harvest. Harvest on a dry day using a fork to avoid damage. Separate the bulbs for storage and allow to dry off. Store in a cool well-ventilated area.
Spinach		Great when used as young leaves. They like Nitrogen and water. Goes to seed (bolts) easily in hot weather.
Spinach Perpetual	Sow	Sow now for a supply of fresh vegetables early next spring. Keep plants weeded and watered.
Squash (Summer)		Watch for slugs. Faster growing than Winter Squash, they are not normally stored for long. They will be growing very quickly now and will need regular checking to see if they are ready to harvest.
Swede	Plant out any pot grown swedes	Do not allow to dry out, big changes between dry and wet soil can cause the swede to split. Not quite as easy to grow as their tough appearance would indicate, they are prone to all the brassica diseases.
Sweetcorn	Water Regularly for best results.	Many varieties are best harvested when paler yellow rather than yellow/gold. The tassels go a brown black colour and the juice should flow a milky colour from the corn kernel when pressed when the Sweetcorn is ready. Just pick and cook one is the easiest test if in doubt.
Swiss Chard (Leaf beets)	Sow Early August	Sow now for Autumn harvest going on into the new year. A relative of the beetroot but grown for its leaves not the root. A cut and come again vegetable – use young leaves in salad.
Tomatoes	When picking try to leave the calyx (the green bit) on, they will store better.	Pinch outside shoots to improve crop. Continue to tie in and support cordon tomatoes. Continue feeding regularly. Remove lower leaves that are shading trusses. Watch for any signs of blight on site. Do not allow the soil to dry out or the fruit is likely to split when watered again

VEGETABLE	SOW/PLANT	NOTES
Turnip	A few varieties like Atlantic can still be sown in early August	Harvest earlier sowings. New sowing ready in 6 to 10 weeks. Remember that turnips are members of the Brassica family. Don't allow them to get too big, unless you are after cattle food.
Watercress Aqua Land cress – American Cress.	Sow	Keep moist – Like Rocket will lift a salad. Unlike watercress does not need to be grown in water. It spreads easily.
Welsh Onions	Sow	Look rather like a large Spring Onion, they grow in clumps rather than single onions. Grown for the stem as much as bulb which tastes great.

HERBS

HERB	SOW	NOTES
Basil Sweet	Sow varieties like 'Christmas' - Plant	Harvest – Remove any flowers to encourage new leaf production.
Bay		Harvest
Borage		Harvest
Chervil	Sow	Harvest Germinates more easily now the weather is warmer
Chives/Garlic Chives		Chive flowers are edible and make a nice decoration for your salad bowl. Cut off flowers before they seed.
Coriander	Sow Some varieties	Germinates more easily now the weather is warmer. Harvest – collect seeds for next year if required.
Dill		Harvest – collect seeds for next year if required.
Fennel Common		Harvest – collect seeds for next year if required.
Hyssop (Liquorice Mint)		Loved by Bees – Can grow up to 2 feet (60cm). Take cuttings.
Lavender		Take cuttings and pot up. Cut and hang up for drying when ready. Lavender is now fashionable amongst foodies.
Marjoram Sweet		Easier to grow from cuttings than seed. Trim after it has flowered. Seems to do better in poor soil. Naturally grows on hot stony hillsides.
Mint		Roots spread quickly - Consider containing them.
Oregano		Harvest when ready – Take cuttings from healthy non-flowering shoots. Seems to do better in poor soil. Naturally grows on hot stony hillsides.
Parsley		Harvest - Water & Feed occasionally.
Rosemary		Take cuttings and pot up. Cut and hang up for drying when ready. Will grow into a large bush unless clipped back
Sage		Will grow into a large bush unless clipped back. Take cuttings and pot up. Harvest when ready. Cut and hang up for drying when ready.
Tarragon French		Much better for cooking – Fussier than Russian to grow. Take cuttings from healthy non-flowering shoots.
Tarragon Russian		Best used to make tarragon vinegar or in salad dressings. Slightly bitter aftertaste. Very easy to grow. Harvest
Thyme		Peg down a stem to form roots to propagate. Does not like to be too wet. Cut and hang up for drying when ready.

JOBS FOR AUGUST

In theory, August should be about weeding, watering and enjoying the fruits (and vegetables) of your labours. With a little careful hoeing and deadheading unless you are collecting the seeds.

If you are an optimistic person now is the time to start thinking about planting your second crop of "New Potatoes" which in theory should provide you with your own New Potatoes at

Christmas. You normally use specially stored seed potatoes, available from seed merchants, planting them in pots or bags that can be moved undercover before the first frosts arrive.

Keep harvesting French and Runner Beans even if you don't need them now, once you stop harvesting the plants will stop producing having produced its seeds for next year. Pinch out the tips of runner beans once they have reached the top of your canes or poles.

Keep Sweetcorn, Peppers, Tomatoes, Cucumbers and Aubergines moist and feed with a high Potash fertiliser such as Tomorite or any other Tomato feed regularly once the fruit starts to form. Remove the lower leaves from Tomato plants any side shoots from cordon Tomatoes to improve ventilation and crop weights. Pinch out the tops of Tomatoes to concentrate the growth on fruit already formed once you have six or so trusses per plant. Make sure Cordon varieties are well supported with a stake. Watch out for bottom end rot.

Watch Tomatoes and Potatoes carefully for any sign of Blight, consider spraying every 10 to 14 days with Bordeaux mixture or similar product. Yellow leaves between the veins, (which stay green) are often a sign of Magnesium deficiency. - Spray with Epsom Salts. Apply a light spray-don't saturate the plants. Mix at about 1 tablespoon to 1 gallon of water.

Remember if blight strikes cut off the tops (haulms) and dispose of them (down the tip is best). Then wait a couple of weeks before harvesting the potatoes to let the blight spores on the surface of the soil die in the sun (ultraviolet) light. If you harvest the Potatoes straight way the chance of contaminating the potatoes with blight spores is high and they will quickly rot in storage. Do not forget to give the skins a chance to dry off before putting them into storage. Remember slugs and mice love stored potatoes - check regularly.

Brussels sprouts and other winter greens can be feed with a little general-purpose fertiliser, sprinkle around the base of the plant carefully.

Cutting back most leafy herbs now will encourage production of a fresh set of leaves that you can harvest to freeze or dry. Thin out any herbs that have become crowded.

Warm dry weather brings problems with mildew, whilst the fungal diseases, like rust and leaf rot are likely to strike in the humid weather that comes with August thunderstorms.

FRUIT

Propagate Strawberries

Cut Off and Pot Up or move to a seed bed any Strawberry runners that you have previously pegged down as soon as they have successfully rooted. They like a sunny position and rich soil to establish themselves.

Summer-prune Gooseberries and Currants

Finish off Summer pruning once all the fruit has been picked. They will normally need to be lightly pruned again in the winter.

Prune Summer Fruiting Raspberries.

Cut down to the ground all canes that have produced fruit and tie in the new green canes that will bear fruit next year. Make note that this only applies to fruiting Raspberry canes, not the Autumn fruiting varieties, which should have just started fruiting.

Blackberry, Tayberry, Loganberry etc.

Continue to tie in the new vigorously growing new non-fruiting canes that are being produced as best you can. These will bear next year's fruit; this year's fruiting canes can be removed at the end of Autumn.

Grape Vines

Remove some foliage and excess side shots to ensure that the Sun can get to the fruit.

Plums and Damsons

Prune plums and damson once they have finished fruit, making sure to remove any dead or broken branches.