

IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN – AUTUMN

Cauliflower - Well drained, near neutral soil, sunny position. Sow late summer and autumn. Mature plants tolerate frost and need coolest part of the year to develop heads. Fold leaves over heads to prevent discolouration from sun.

Broccoli - High in vitamin C and protein. Rich soil with some lime added and keep well-watered. Sow in autumn to ensure harvest in cooler months. Frost hardy – doesn't thrive in hot weather.

Cabbage – Rich well drained soil with some lime added, sunny position and well-watered. Sow end of summer to winter, also early spring. Mature plants tolerate frost.

N.B. Watch all brassicas for caterpillars of white butterfly which are often easy to miss until a lot of damage has been done. They can be picked off or sprayed with dipel.

Broad Beans – Rich in vitamins B and E. Slightly acid to neutral soil - too much nitrogen will produce leaves at the expense of flowers. Pinching out the tips after first flowers will encourage pods to set and plants may need support. Sow late summer, autumn and winter. Mature plants withstand frost.

Sugar Snap Peas - Average well-drained soil, sunny position. Climbing plants yield over a longer period and will need support. Sow late summer to autumn, frost resistant. Edible pods, so pick when pods are fat but peas are not too developed. If you miss some they can be shelled and used as regular peas.

Beetroot – High in nutrition and vitamins, tops are a rich source of Vit C and can be used in salads and soups. Well drained soil with lime added but keep moist. Sow spring, summer and autumn.

Celery – Well drained soil with plenty of manure and don't allow to dry out. Sow autumn and spring but prefers cool conditions. Stalks can be blanched with newspaper or cardboard but vitamin content will be diminished.

Strawberries – Slightly acid well-drained soil in sunny position. Set out plants in May-June and plant crown just out of ground. Be careful of too much nitrogen and mulch well with straw etc. to keep berries clear of the soil. Give potassium to encourage flowers and fruit (ash out of the fire can be used). Replant every 2-3 years.

NOTES ON DIPEL – is a product that specifically targets caterpillars. It contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* which affect the caterpillar's digestive system. It is safe for birds, ladybirds, bees, fish etc. and is certified organic. It is available at garden centres and hardwares and comes in a powder form which needs to mixed with

water, according to directions, to form a spray. A 500ml spray bottle is usually sufficient for home gardeners.