



## Vegetables in June

By **Ashley Wheeler**

June is a bit of a moment for market gardeners, it can be the turnaround month where all of the slog of spring comes together, or sometimes it can be a continuation of the slog...

It has been a difficult Spring—with the theme of wet, fairly cool spring weather continuing from last Spring. However, we had some good weather at the beginning of May which helped us to get back on track with hoeing and planting. May is a huge month for planting and it is difficult to get everything done that needs doing. There is always something that slips a little. By June we hope to have the bulk of the market garden planted up, with still some crops to be planted out in the field for later autumn and winter veg.

This does not mean that we can just sit back and watch it all grow unfortunately. This is the moment to make sure we stay on top of the weeding, but also continue the seed sowing to ensure a succession of crops through the summer and autumn. Some of the early spring crops have either finished cropping or are coming to an end, so we need to make sure that we can fill the beds with something else as soon as possible. This is not only to ensure that we can produce the most out of the space as possible, but it is also to ensure that we have healthy, living plants in the soil for as long as possible, whether that be vegetable crops or green manures feeding soil life and keeping it healthy for subsequent crops.

We have a week by week plan of the market garden so that we know when a new crop will be planted. This allows us to work back and work out what we need to do to prepare the beds for those plantings. Usually we will mow off old crops and cover with thick silage plastic for 2-3 weeks in the summer. This allows enough time to kill off the old crops and weeds, whilst not leaving the soil for too long without living roots giving back to the soil life. Having a clear plan of which crops will be planted where and when allows us to easily see when beds need mowing off and we can work in an organised, prepared way rather than a more hectic, reactionary approach.

In the middle of summer when there is so much to do and think about this is really important, as it means that we don't need to give it too much thought—the thought has gone into this through the quieter winter months, and it is all planned out and organised already. Of course, things don't always go to plan, but the crop plans allow flexibility, so we can move crops around a bit if we need to and adjust as and when things don't quite go to plan.



*Cramming in lots of planting in time for the rain*

As you can see in the list below there is plenty to be sowing at this time of year to ensure successional cropping, so be sure to stay on top of sowing rather than relying on one batch of sowing in Spring to keep you going with veg all through the year. June is also a good month to undersow some of the longer term crops with green manures which will add a diversity of crops to your growing space, and build a healthier soil. We use a variety of clovers—white, red and crimson, plus yellow trefoil, and then add in a mix of flowering annuals such as linseed, buckwheat, phacelia and also usually a grain such as oats. We literally throw this over the crops such as courgettes, squash, runner beans, kale and other autumn brassicas and then hoe it in. If the soil is dry we will water these in, but ideally we rely on the rain to water in the seed.

Let's hope for a sunny June to get those tomatoes ripening and everything growing!!

**WHAT TO SOW THIS MONTH:** purple sprouting broccoli & January King type winter cabbage (early this month), french beans, chard, beetroot, chard, carrots, basil, late cucumbers, kale, fennel, salad leaves—summer purslane, buckshorn plantain, salad burnet, lettuce, chicory (Treviso and Palla Rossa varieties early in the month, other varieties later), endive, mustards and rocket (mesh to keep flea beetle off), goosefoot, anise hyssop, amaranth, orache, nasturtiums.

**WHAT TO PLANT THIS MONTH:**

**OUTSIDE:** Dwarf french beans, beetroot, squash and corn (if not already done), lettuce and salads, squash, runner beans, kale, chard, autumn cabbage, broccoli, leeks, celeriac

INSIDE: climbing french beans, cucumbers, basil, salads—goosefoot, summer purslane

OTHER IMPORTANT TASKS THIS MONTH: Undersow squash with a mix of red and white clovers, yellow trefoil, and other cornfield wildflowers - this will help to fix nitrogen, but more importantly cover the soil and provide organic matter and living roots for soil organisms to benefit from. Also, keep on top of sideshooting your tomato plants every week so that you can maintain good airflow around the plants.

*Don't forget that we run courses on salad growing and market gardening, so if you would like to learn more about how we do things check out our website [www.trillfarmgarden.co.uk](http://www.trillfarmgarden.co.uk). We also deliver veg door to door around Axminster, Lyme, Seaton, Beer and Charmouth so if you don't have the space to grow your own, please get in touch about getting a bag of veg from us.*



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