# A more digestible Guide to Jobs to do on the Allotment in August

Composited off the Internet
By Gareth Richards

Fruit & Vegetable Growing Guide for Augus

August with a little luck brings us the best of the summer weather but being the traditional holiday month it can be hard to keep on top of the vegetable plot with a fortnight away even if a neighbour can be persuaded to water as required

Sowing & Planting in August on the Vegetable Plot

Direct Sowing in August
There are still quite a few things you should be sowing in August. Spring Cabbage and Chinese cabbage, which is a late crop as well as hardy lettuce.

Although we think of lettuce as a summer crop, it is a surprisingly hardy plant and under cloche and in the greenhouse can easily be available for a Boxing day salad rather than some tasteless import from sunnier climes.

Sow spring onions like White Lisbon winter hardy which will grow, albeit slowly, to add zing to that salad along with some fast growing radishes.

Late spinach can be sown in August along with a last sowing of kohlrabi and turnips.

Planting Out in August
Plant out the savoy cabbages and cauliflowers to grow on for the earliest crop as well as hardy kales.

Cultivation, Pests & Problems
Your runner beans will be at the top of the canes now so pinch out their growing tip to encourage bushier growth below. Pick all runner, climbing and dwarf beans regularly except for the haricot varieties such as Borlotti where we want the bean rather than pod for table.

Stop tomato plants now to encourage fruit to swell and ripen. Stopping is the process of cutting off the growing tip so the plant's energy is not diverted into foliage from fruit. Keep your tomato side shoots in check, you want tomatoes not masses of foliage. Ensure they are watered regularly, drying out prevents the plant from taking up sufficient calcium and the deficit causes blossom end rot.

Keep on top of the pests. Aphids and Blackfly are a particular problem in the greenhouse although they are certainly about in the open plot as well. You can control them with pesticides or just wash them off many plants with a strong jet of water.

A squirt with soft soap solution will do no harm to the plants and will reduce the numbers down by stopping the pests breathing. In the greenhouse the biological controls are most effective and don't forget the traditional sticky yellow cards which attract the whitefly. .

Fruit
If we do get a prolonged dry spell, don't forget that that fruit bushes and trees need watering. Swelling apples and currants need water as much as leafy vegetables. Give a good soaking rather than little spinkles that encourage surface rooting.

It's the last chance for summer pruning. Watch out for overladen plums and damsons.If needed you can suppot branches by inserting a length of 2×1 notched at the top (like an old fashioned line prop) to support the branch or tie to the stem with robust twine.

Keep the base of trees weed and grass free, mulch to keep in moisture and add fertility with garden compost.

Protect autumn raspberries now with netting from the birds before the fruits arrive and the birds eat them.

In the Greenhouse / Polytunnel

Ensure good ventilation. It can get incredibly hot in a greenhouse with strong sun and scorch your plants. You should also consider shading the house either with blinds or films or with a shading wash
Keep pinching off the side shoots with your tomatoes and stop them a few leaves after a truss by pinching out the growing stem.

keep an eye out for pests such as aphids, whitefly, red spider mite. If you are subject to attack by these pests it is worth checking out biological controls as these are perfectly safe to use and, used correctly, more effective than traditional chemical controls.

Many of the chemical controls of the past are no longer available anyway so the organic alternatives are now the mainstream choice.

Growing in a Polytunnel in August

What to sow, plant and harvest from your polytunnel in August

In August there is even more bounty than in July, whether you're growing in a polytunnel or a greenhouse. You may have produced enough courgettes and cucumbers for the whole neighbourhood. The tomatoes are made into soups and frozen and you reap the rewards for all your efforts.

Be aware though, in August there is often an influx of pests and diseases and you are often too busy harvesting your crops and somewhat neglect your plants. It is absolutely important to keep a close eye on your plants during August.

Sowing in the Polytunnel
Direct sowing into beds in the polytunnel
It is very unlikely that you will find any empty space in your tunnel or greenhouse for direct sowing.

Planting into beds in the polytunnel
You can plant all the crops you have sown a month earlier in modular trays into your tunnel or greenhouse:

Calabrese, Chinese cabbage, claytonia, coriander, dill and chervil, Florence fennel, lettuce, oriental brassica salads, pak choi, parsley, scallions.

Sowing into modules/pots (18–20°C)
Calabrese (Green Magic F1) – 1 seed per cell
Chard (any type) – 1 seed per cell
Chinese cabbage (Yuki F1) – 1 seed per cell
Claytonia (or Winter Purslane) – 5 seeds per cell
Chervil, Coriander, Dill – 5 seeds per cell each
Florence fennel (Rondo F1) – 1 seed per cell
Lettuce (various types) – 1 to 3 seeds per cell
Oriental brassica salads (all types) – 5 seeds per cell
Pak Choi (various) – 1 seed per cell
Parsley (curly and flat leaf) – 4 seeds per cell
Scallions (Ishikura Bunching) – 10 seeds per cell
Spinach (annual) – 4 seeds per cell
Spinach (perpetual) – 1 seed per cell
Harvesting from the Polytunnel
In August you are bound to have plenty of excess produce. You have the choice to preserve, to give away or to compost, so be prepared for the glut and warn your friends and neighbours about those courgettes or worse even marrows.

Harvest your courgettes and cucumbers at least twice per week and your tomatoes, peppers and aubergines at least once per week.

You can harvest:

Aubergines, basil, coriander, Chinese cabbage, chillies, courgette, cucumber, dill, Florence fennel, French beans, lettuce, melons, pak choi, peppers, salads, scallions, spinach and tomatoes.

General greenhouse/polytunnel maintenance

Water more frequently and more heavily now, about two to three times per week, especially during hot spells. Avoid watering in the evening as this will encourage the spread of fungal diseases.
Ventilate as much as possible. The tunnel and greenhouse doors should be left open until late in the evening or even throughout the night.
Weekly maintenance for summer crops: side-shooting and training tomatoes, cucumbers and melons. You should also remove the lower discoloured or diseased leaves.
During August it is most important to check your plants regularly and remove any dead or diseased plants or plant parts, especially grey mould (botrytis) on tomatoes and many other plants as well as keeping a check on the greenhouse whitefly.
Harvest regularly when the crops are ready (not as and when you'd like them).
Keep a watch out for pests, especially greenhouse whitefly, tomato moth caterpillars, aphids, red spider mite, slugs and snails.
Spray aphid susceptible plants with a garlic spray every seven days.

# How to Contact the Editor

If you have comments or you know I have given wrong advice then please contact me by email at

info@yeovil-allotments-association.co.uk

If you have something to contribute or have a say on allotment life, then please use my email to send your contributions.

I am going to process the magazine issue once a month, so if there are comments you would like to make they can be answered in future editions.

I would like to add that most of the articles are taken off the web and some well known gardening and allotments magazines have been read in the making of our magazine content.

We also have our own website at :

www.yeovil-allotments-association.co.uk

where you can find this magazine as well as a catalogue

Happy Allotmenteering and best wishes,

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