



Magazine Issue 9
July 2026

Dear Fellow Allotmenters,

As the second month of Summer, July is, on average, the warmest month of the year in the northern hemisphere. Its southern hemisphere equivalent is **January**.

The Anglo-Saxons had multiple names for the month of July, including Maed-monath and Hey-monath. Respectively, these translated into “the flowering of meadows” and “hay month.”

There are two star signs which fall in the month of July. If you're born before **July 22nd**, then your star sign is Cancer. If you're born after this day, from **July 23rd** onward, then you're a Leo. Those born under the sign of Cancer are said to be loyal friends with great emotional depth, and those born under the sign of Leo are said to be very proud people who display great leadership.

July has two birth flowers – **the water lily and the larkspur**. The water lily is a symbol of a pure heart, while the larkspur (especially its white form) represents the lightness of the heart.

The birthstone of July is the **ruby**, considered by many to be the king of gems. At one point in time, it was considered to protect warriors on the field of battle if it was embedded in their armor. Nowadays, as a birthstone, it's said to protect against evil.

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The Annual Trophies Table

The Albert Knight Cup

The Chairman's Cup

The Home Produce Cup

The Anne Meyrick Tankard

The Crystal Cup

The Flower Cup

The Garden Group Prize

Last years show took place at Johnson Park Sports and Social Club on the 17th August 2025. Guest of honour that year was the Mayor Bob Locke and his wife.

It was our first show in our new home and went very well. Several new members won medals and silverware and in the judge's words the event was encouraging and promising.

Hopefully the second year at Johnson Park will be a big success.

2025 Winners

The Albert Knight Cup

For best Exhibit in Fruit and Vegetables
was awarded to Abdul and Dessy Elmahdy

The Home Produce Cup

The most points in Home Produce was
awarded to Janet Gordon

The Chairman's Cup

The most points for Fruit and Vegetables was
awarded to Keith Hartnell

The Crystal Cup

For the best exhibits in Flowers and Plants was
awarded to Roger Downting

The Anne Meyrick Tankard

The most points in Show was awarded to
David Recardo

The Flower Cup

For the most points in Flowers and Plants was
awarded to Elna Nioda

The Garden Group Prize

For the best plant from plug supplied was
awarded to David Recardo

Individual Class Winners 2025

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : White Potatoes
M. Randall
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Carrots
D. Priddle
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Onions
A. & D. Elmahdy
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 6 French Beans
K. Hartnell
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 1 Lettuce
M. Randall

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 5 Cherry Toms
A. Halford
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 2 Courgettes
K. Hartnell
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Heaviest Tom.
A. & D. Elmahdy
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Pears
D. Priddle
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Plums
D. Priddle

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 15 Soft Fruits
I. Slade
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Single Rose
J. Slade
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Single Dahlia
R. Downting
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Vase of Flowers
A. Taylor
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Mult. Sunflower
E. Nioda

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Cacti/SucInt
N. & P. Pitman
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 60cm Contr
A. & D. Elmahdy
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Jam
J. Gordon
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Chutney
S. Selwood
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Fruit Scones
D. Recardo
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Vic. Sandwich
N. & P. Pitman

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Coloured Pot.
E. Nioda
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Beetroots
K. Hartnell
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 6 Shallots
K. Hartnell
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 6 Runner Beans
J. Gordon
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 5 Tomatoes
E. Nioda

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 2 Cucumbers
D. Priddle
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Heaviest Onion
R. Morton
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Heaviest Potato
D. Recardo
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Apples
A. & D. Elmahdy
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 15 Berries
M. Randall
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Herbs
A. & D. Elmahdy

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 3 Dahlias
R. Downting
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 6 Sweetpeas
D. Recardo
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Mixed Flowers
R. Morton
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Lgst Sunflower
A. Taylor
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Gold Club Plug
D. Recardo

Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Any Other
E. Nioda
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Jelly
J. Gordon
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : 6 Shortbread
A. Taylor
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Apple Cake
J. Day
Y.A.A. 2025
Winner : Tray Bake
C. Taylor

There were 42 individual categories judged at the show. So well done to everyone who won something.

I decided to issue a medal for the category winners, some thing to keep forever.

The main Trophy winners were given a trophy each to keep as all the silverware has to be returned every year.

The Awards have been given to reward the great efforts that is involved in producing fruit and vegetables fit for the show.

Well done to everyone.

And finally all the Winners in a group shot. Well done to all last years winners



It is a team effort, and would not be possible without the two Judges doing their bit on the day. Firstly, thanks to our top show Judge and Chairman Manny Roper for judging fruit, flowers and vegetables and our former female member Judge Alison Read who kindly came to judge the jams, cakes and biscuits. Many thanks to you both.

Finally a big thank you to David Recardo the Show Secretary and Anne Taylor the Show Organiser for doing most of the pre-show setting up last year.

Also a kind thank you to our committee and members who helped on the Saturday evening and on Show Day to set up.

Your July Gardening Checklist

July is often one of the hottest and busiest months on the allotment. With crops ripening fast, pests multiplying, and water at a premium, it's a time of reward—but also of routine. Here's your complete checklist to keep your plot thriving this month.

July brings warm weather and plenty to do on the allotment. As your crops mature quickly and pests become more active, regular watering and vigilant care are essential. It's a crucial time to harvest, protect, and prepare for the months ahead, keeping your plot healthy and productive through the summer heat.

Soil Preparation & General Maintenance

Hoe often– A dry July sun makes this the perfect time to hoe off young weeds. A regular hoeing regime keeps your soil open, weed-free, and allows water to penetrate easily.

Mulch thirsty crops– Tomatoes, courgettes, pumpkins, and beans will benefit from a thick mulch of compost or well-rotted manure to retain moisture and reduce evaporation.

Water wisely– Early morning or late evening is best. Aim for fewer, deeper waterings that soak into the root zone rather than frequent light sprinkles.

Watch for blight– On potatoes and tomatoes, look out for black blotches on foliage. If spotted early, cut down the top growth immediately to protect the tubers or fruit.

Vegetable Tasks

July is the perfect time to keep your allotment productive with regular feeding, careful planting, and ongoing maintenance.

Liquid feed crops weekly to maintain productivity, especially for tomatoes, cucumbers, courgettes, and sweetcorn.

Harvest early potatoes as needed. Replant quick-maturing crops like salad leaves or French beans in the vacant space.

Lift shallots and lay them out to dry once their foliage dies down.

Make your final sowing of dwarf French beans now for a late crop in September.

Plant out winter brassicas like kale, cabbage, and purple sprouting broccoli. Firm the soil well to prevent wind rock.

Keep sowing salad crops in small batches, preferably in cooler spots or partial shade, to reduce bolting.

Thin swedes and turnips sown last month for better root development.

Plant out beetroot, fennel, and kohlrabi raised earlier in pots.

Stake tall crops like runner beans, sprouts, peas, and asparagus ferns.

Encourage pollinators by growing flowers nearby—runner beans especially benefit from good insect activity.

Fruit Tasks

Fruit trees and bushes are growing rapidly and beginning to bear fruit. Now's the time to thin crops, apply mulch, and keep a close watch for any issues.

Prune trained apple and pear trees (espaliers, cordons, etc.) by reducing side shoots to 3–5 leaves.

Protect cherries with netting before the birds beat you to them!

Harvest the last of your rhubarb and mulch crowns generously to build reserves for next year.

Prune gooseberries and currants by shortening side shoots to help next year's fruiting.

Thin heavy-set apples and plums to prevent branch breakage and improve remaining fruit quality.

Greenhouse & Polytunnel

Greenhouses and polytunnels are in full swing this July. Proper ventilation, consistent watering, and careful plant care are essential to keep everything thriving.

Ventilate daily to prevent heat stress. Prop open doors, vents, or roll up tunnel sides.

Dampen floors to boost humidity and deter red spider mites.

Tie in cucumbers, melons and tomatoes as they grow.

Water and feed tomatoes regularly to prevent blossom end rot. Use a high-potash feed weekly.

Hand-pollinate melons by transferring pollen from male to female flowers with a soft brush or by using a male flower directly.

Flower Tasks

July sees ornamental borders in full bloom, but it's still a busy month for harvesting cut flowers and supporting plant structures.

Water well in dry spells—especially for dahlias and sweet peas.

Keep deadheading to encourage more blooms, especially in sweet peas and annuals like cosmos.

Stake dahlias and chrysanthemums—they're heavy feeders and tall growers.

Harvest cut flowers regularly to keep new blooms coming.

Pest Control & General Allotment Maintenance

The summer heat means pests are more active—stay vigilant with regular checks and control measures.

Slugs and snails are still active, especially after rain. Set traps or pick off by hand in the evening.

Aphids multiply quickly in the heat—use soapy sprays or encourage ladybirds.

Watch out for cabbage white butterflies—net brassicas and inspect for eggs and caterpillars.

What to Harvest

Mid-summer brings a surge in harvest—here are some crops to watch for this month:

New potatoes

Shallots and early onions

Beetroot and baby carrots

Courgettes and cucumbers

Lettuce, salad leaves, and radishes

Strawberries, gooseberries, and early cherries

Rhubarb (last chance!)

Broad beans and early French beans

Final Thoughts

July brings bounty, but it also brings heat, pests, and pressure on your plants. Watering and feeding are key, as is staying one step ahead of pests and diseases. But with a little effort and attention, your allotment can be bursting with fresh produce, colourful flowers, and the deep satisfaction of summer success.



4th of July



S	O	I	R	V	L	H	E	U	N	I	N	B	J	K	B	U	H
O	T	F	M	I	D	E	C	L	A	R	A	T	I	O	N	O	D
E	B	S	G	W	C	A	S	T	T	N	W	F	E	F	W	F	A
E	N	A	L	V	E	D	P	S	I	I	R	N	A	O	S	I	D
S	W	R	R	N	C	E	R	U	O	V	L	I	K	K	R	R	E
U	K	Y	N	B	M	H	O	P	N	E	R	N	I	A	U	E	H
X	M	Y	O	E	A	D	X	F	R	E	E	D	O	M	M	W	D
L	D	A	S	O	L	C	M	O	Z	H	N	E	D	E	L	O	E
Y	N	H	T	H	I	F	U	R	S	H	A	P	I	R	D	R	F
U	J	R	H	E	O	K	V	E	C	E	O	E	T	I	S	K	K
M	E	T	E	L	S	W	W	E	O	Z	G	N	U	C	T	S	A
U	M	A	R	C	H	I	N	G	B	A	N	D	F	A	R	S	F
B	P	T	I	V	T	V	P	D	E	T	J	E	K	E	O	N	L
E	X	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	I	J	N	E	E
O	F	E	K	G	Y	A	N	R	B	A	R	C	R	R	U	I	X
P	A	R	A	D	E	D	H	L	U	L	H	E	E	H	E	L	R
T	X	C	T	I	V	T	V	P	D	E	T	X	H	B	O	Y	Y

INDEPENDENCE
AMERICA
NATION
FIREWORKS

PARADE
BARBACUE
JULY
FREEDOM

DECLARATION
CELEBRATION
MARCHING BAND
SKYSHOW



Disney Princesses

D	O	P	H	C	E	Y	R	L	W	H	C
A	G	H	C	A	L	L	I	U	M	E	I
M	E	R	I	D	A	U	S	E	R	T	N
P	U	O	Z	K	E	X	N	A	J	Z	D
O	A	L	G	A	U	R	O	R	A	R	E
T	M	O	A	N	A	P	W	G	S	A	R
I	U	E	R	N	O	S	W	O	M	Y	E
A	W	H	I	A	D	M	H	J	I	A	L
N	G	I	E	C	L	Z	I	A	N	E	L
A	B	E	L	L	E	T	T	I	E	Z	A
U	R	A	P	U	N	Z	E	L	I	L	M
M	C	P	O	C	A	H	O	N	T	A	S

JASMINE

MERIDA

ARIEL

CINDERELLA

Rapunzel

POCAHONTAS

TIANA

AURORA

BELLE

MULAN

SNOW WHITE

ELSA

ANNA

ASHA

MOANA

Raya



CATS

X	R	E	P	O	M	A	U	P	E	R	S	I	A	N	E	X	A
C	T	D	E	S	A	Q	V	N	H	A	N	E	B	D	P	X	U
P	H	U	R	O	S	I	A	M	E	S	E	I	Y	N	S	D	E
I	S	P	R	L	K	H	E	A	C	K	O	A	S	S	C	B	A
R	C	A	H	K	E	S	P	H	Y	N	X	Y	S	P	O	U	S
H	U	V	Y	N	I	A	X	K	A	I	S	V	I	L	T	O	A
R	E	S	U	E	X	S	N	B	I	R	M	A	N	Y	T	A	V
I	D	L	S	G	H	P	H	E	B	U	H	F	I	N	I	B	A
C	E	S	P	I	N	V	O	A	Y	X	N	Y	A	G	S	O	N
K	V	H	O	B	A	U	R	F	N	S	N	A	N	T	H	P	N
E	O	N	T	Y	X	N	I	R	A	G	D	O	L	L	F	U	A
C	N	R	O	B	O	M	B	A	Y	I	O	B	A	D	O	J	H
A	R	V	A	L	V	E	B	L	E	T	M	R	U	R	L	V	A
M	E	C	H	T	M	P	K	D	U	C	N	E	A	T	D	E	Y
Y	X	R	U	J	A	B	U	E	T	E	B	N	H	L	E	N	X
E	T	X	I	N	N	A	Y	L	B	Y	R	B	E	N	G	A	L
D	C	H	A	R	T	R	E	U	X	U	Y	P	V	O	A	N	E

PERSIAN

SIAMESE

BENGAL

RAGDOLL

SPHYNX

ABYSSINIAN

BIRMAN

SAVANNAH

CHARTREUX

KORAT

DEVON REX

SCOTTISH FOLD

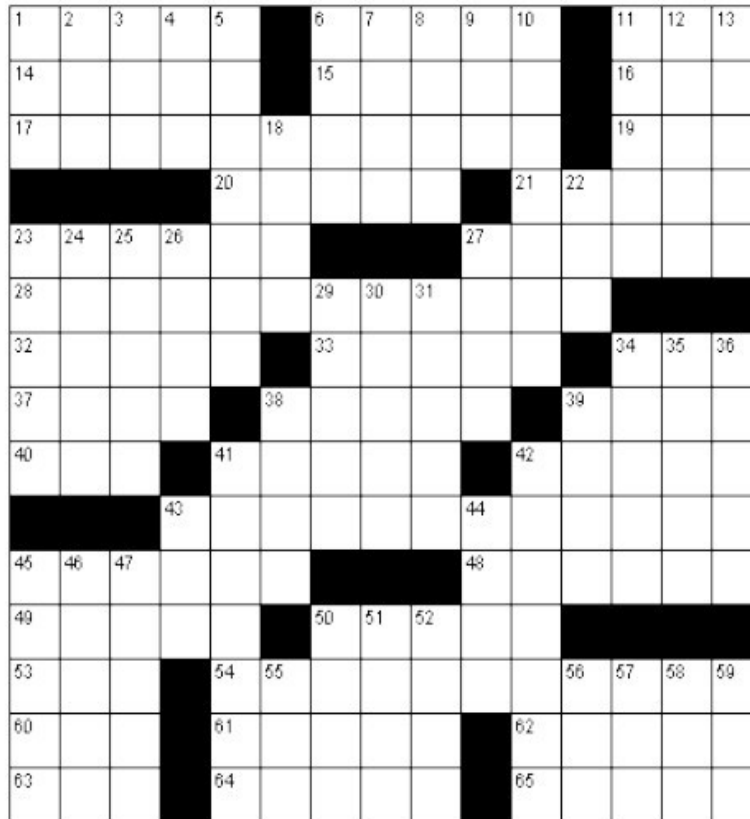
RUSSIAN BLUE

TURKISH ANGORA

BOMBAY



Crossword no.175



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ACROSS

1. A floral leaf
6. Afterpiece in ancient Roman theater
11. Garland
14. Nimble
15. Wampum
16. Entirely
17. Encirclement
19. Japanese apricot
20. Fearful anticipation
21. Swelling under the skin
23. A type of medium-sized penguins
27. Relating to the iris of the eye
28. Marched in protest
32. In accompaniment
33. Felt intense anger
34. Soak or saturate
37. Door-like fence barrier
38. A woman of refinement
39. Country in South America
40. Center of a hurricane
41. A family of languages spoken in SE Asia
42. Not the groom
43. Represses within
45. Caramelized sugar
48. Bets

49. Increase in salary
50. Wooden shoe
53. American Sign Language
54. Tiny blood vessels
60. C
61. Put up with something
62. "Dressed to the _____"
63. S
64. Fitted with small glass panels
65. 1000 kilograms

DOWN

1. Bag
2. Self-importance
3. Needle
4. Alternate (abbrev.)
5. Directing
6. Serf
7. Arctic gull
8. Indebtedness
9. Former vice-president _____ Quayle
10. Went inside
11. Anagram of "Medal"
12. Oleoresin
13. Of the lower body
18. Anagram of "Sire"
22. Performed or accomplished
23. A condensed but memorable saying
24. Postponement
25. Give expression to emotion
26. Solitary
27. An individual unit
29. Exchange
30. Detection by radio waves
31. Once more
34. Take by force
35. Command
36. Suppose or estimate
38. Spouse
39. Anagram of "Grip"
41. Patella
42. Completely obvious

43. Contingencies
44. Absent Without Leave
45. Follow or ascertain
46. Fertile areas in deserts
47. Dossiers
50. Rotate
51. Assistant
52. Hemorrhaged
55. Fabric made of camel hair
56. _____ de Janeiro, Brazil
57. Hotel
58. Even
59. South southeast

Companion Planting at Your Allotment

Companion gardening is the process of growing two or more plants together that are mutually beneficial to each other.

Nature has a way of meeting its every need and by implementing these combinations, we can maximise the crop output, prevent pest outbreaks and promote self-pollination.

Companion planting works in many different ways. For example, one plant may deter certain pests that will likely eat the leaves of the other. Some will help to attract pollinators and some may help with pollination and to fight disease.

However, just as some plants grow well together, there are some that should not be planted together. Incompatible planting can lead to a poor crop yield and can be detrimental to growth.

Some companion plants can be planted together in the same bed, some will benefit from being close by or bordering the bed.

Of course, companion planting is not limited to [vegetables](#), [fruit](#) and [herbs](#). Flowers too, offer their benefits as well as colour and pollination.

Are you new to allotment growing? Would you like to learn more about companion planting? Our companion planting guide is here to do just that. It will help you save space in your garden and maximise success.

Growing Friends

Asparagus and Tomatoes

Brassicas and Sage

Beans and Sweetcorn

Beetroot and Chard, Spinach, Lettuce and Brassicas

Broad beans and Summer Savory

Broccoli and Brassicas, Beetroot, Celery, Cucumber, Onions
(Alliums)

Brussels Sprouts and Brassicas, Beetroot, Celery, Cucumber,
Onions (Alliums)

Cabbage, Cauliflower, Kale and Mint, Nasturtium

Carrots and Leeks, Mint or Spring Onions

Celeriac and Onions, Radishes, Lettuce, Leeks

Chard and Beetroot, Lettuce, Onions, Brassicas, Beans, Celery

Chives and Chrysanthemums

Courgette and Calendula

Cucumbers and Tomatoes, Lettuce, Beans, Peas

Garlic and Roses

Kale and Beetroot, Lettuce, Brassicas, Onions, Celery

Lettuce and Radishes, Brassicas, Onions

Onion and Mint

Parsnips and other Root Veg and Onions

Radish and Mint

Roses and Chives, Garlic, Mint, Thyme

Runner beans and Nasturtium or Sweet Peas

Squash and Sweetcorn, Beans, Radishes

Sunflowers and Chives

Tomatoes and Basil, Chives, Marigolds, Mint

Growing 'Enemies'

Beans and Onions (Alliums)

Beetroot and Runner Beans

Broccoli and Tomatoes, Peppers, Squashes, Courgettes

Brussels Sprouts and Tomatoes, Peppers, Squashes, Courgettes

Cabbage and Tomatoes, Peppers, Squashes, Courgettes

Carrots and Potatoes

Cauliflower and Tomatoes, Peppers, Squashes, Courgettes

Celeriac and Celery (not immediately close)

Celery and Celeriac (not immediately close)

Chard and Potatoes, Sweetcorn, Cucumbers, Courgettes,
Squashes

Garlic and Legumes

Kale and Tomatoes, Peppers, Squashes, Courgettes

Leeks and Legumes

Onions and Legumes

Parsnips and Potatoes, Carrots

Peas and Onions

Peppers and Brassicas, Potatoes

Potatoes and Brassicas, Parsnips, Tomatoes, Peppers,
Courgettes, Squashes, Carrots

Spinach and Potatoes

Sweetcorn and Tomatoes

Tomatoes and Brassicas, Potatoes, Sweetcorn

Plant Benefits

Basil improves peppers' productivity and enhances flavour with tomatoes, lettuce and peppers

Beans release nitrogen into the soil

Chives, Onions, Lavender will attract pollinators

Garlic deters pests with its pungent aroma

Herbs deter pests as well as attract pollinators - See details for individual varieties

Lettuces provide ground cover and water retention

Mint deters pests with its strong aroma

Nasturtiums deter blackfly, Cabbage white butterfly and other pests

Onions, Allium family deter carrot fly and pests due to their pungent smell

Peas release nitrogen into the soil

Radishes deter pests and aphids

Sweetcorn and tall plants can provide shade

Successful Companion Gardening

1. Avoid growing plants from the same family together. If there is a pest outbreak, both of your crops will be destroyed simultaneously.
2. Plant 'tall' plants, such as sweet corn, when growing crops that require shade and are prone to bolting, such as spinach or beetroot.
3. Try intercropping, which is growing a faster-growing plant with a slower one. This prevents weeds from growing, which can drain nutrients and water and also attract pests.
4. Plant herbs along the border of your allotment to prevent insects and flies from venturing in.
5. Grow enemy plants together. Choose to plant insect-friendly or bird-friendly plants together, as they act as natural predators that keep away harmful pests.
6. Try to plant vertical growers, like beans, with more horizontal plants, like pumpkins or squashes.
7. Nitrogen-fixing plants, such as beans and peas, should be planted when growing crops like tomatoes or corn to naturally replenish the soil nutrients.
8. Rotate crops annually to prevent soil depletion.

Potatoes

Cabbage, peas, horseradish and marigolds are great companion plants for [potatoes](#) that are susceptible to pest and disease outbreaks. Cabbage helps to repel potato beetles, while horseradish improves pest resistance. It's best to avoid growing tomatoes and pumpkins with potatoes.

Spinach

Vegetables to grow together include [spinach](#) with strawberries, onions and peas. These plants provide adequate shade to spinach plants, which are often prone to bolting.

Fruit to Grow Together

Let's look into some popular fruit to grow together as companion plants.

Strawberries

Growing [strawberries](#) at your allotment or from your kitchen garden? Plant spinach, lettuce, onions, garlic or thyme alongside them as companion plants. These companion plants help to repel slugs and aphids that can destroy strawberry plants, helping you get a good produce.

Blueberries

Blueberries are popularly grown with companion plants such as rhododendrons, azaleas and heathers. They grow in similar soil conditions and aid in crop production. Tomatoes shouldn't be planted along with blueberries, as it's a heavy feeder and can consume the essential soil nutrients needed for bearing fruit.

Apples

Apple trees grow well near daffodils and chives, which help to repel aphids and apple maggots. Nasturtiums prevent codling moths from impacting apple plants while attracting beneficial insects to help with pollination.

Pears

Pears are often susceptible to pests, such as fire blight bacteria, which can be deterred by beneficial insects such as ladybirds and hoverflies. Companion planting with marigolds, lavender and thyme can be an excellent solution for this problem.

Plums

Do you want to grow juicy **plums** in your allotment? Plant clover to fix nitrogen and improve soil fertility. Walnut trees should not be planted along with plum trees.

Herbs to Grow Together

Let's look at some popular herbs to plant together as companion plants.

Basil

Oregano, parsley and [basil](#) are great herbs to plant together, along with tomatoes and peppers. Sage and rosemary should be avoided as they need dry soil while basil requires moisture-rich soil.

Mint

Cabbage, broccoli and kale are compatible with [mint](#) as they attract beneficial insects like hoverflies, while deterring cabbage moths and aphids.

Parsley

Chives and basil are great companion plants for [parsley](#). Mint should be avoided alongside parsley, as it can dominate the flavour profile.

Corriander

Lettuce, dill and basil are great companion plants for corriander. They shouldn't be planted with fennel, which can inhibit the growth of corriander.

Thyme

Rosemary, lavender and strawberries should be grown together with **thyme** as they thrive in similar conditions. Dill shouldn't be grown with thyme, as their growth patterns and soil type differ completely.

Outreach Project Update

We are progressing with our program of events. We have a whole month in the Library window starting Monday 29th June and the display will be taken down on the 1st of August.

Other news, we are finalising a Class 10 visit from Fairmead Special School to Milford Dip allotment site where our Chairman Manfred Roper will talk about growing food. We still have to finalise a few details but hopefully I will be able to report some response to the visit after 8th July

Similarly in our efforts to promote Allotment Life and it's benefits to your mental health I will hopefully have some news on supporting a Somerset Charity which advocates such practice to mental health sufferers who are interested in growing and horticulture as a form of future work and recovery after illness.

I will update you through the website if and when the committee approve the support.

Many Thanks,

Gareth Richards
Treasurer

Solution

S	E	P	A	L		E	X	O	D	E		L	E	I
A	G	I	L	E		S	E	W	A	N		A	L	L
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How to Grow Fruit at the Allotment: A Detailed Guide

Growing fruit is a rewarding challenge, that despite what people think, is absolutely possible to do in the UK. In fact, with our fairly temperate weather and cultivable land, you can enjoy fresh, year-round produce. From apples and pears to different types of berries, choose your favourite fruit and give it a go!

If you're wondering how to grow fruit, you're in the right place. With Allotment Online's detailed individual [fruit-growing guides](#) at your fingertips, you'll find tried-and-tested tips and tricks on the best fruits to grow in your allotment.

Growing fruit in your allotment has never been easier!

How to Choose What Fruit to Grow

The first step to growing fruit is deciding what you want to grow. Shortlisting your favourite options or making a note of what you eat the most of can be a good start. Before narrowing down your selection, find out how simple it is to grow each fruit by determining whether or not it requires special growing conditions, such as a greenhouse.

For example, to grow fruit like peaches, you need a particularly sunny allotment spot. However, if your allotment receives a lot of shade, then it would make more sense to grow fruit trees or plants that thrive better in shade-rich conditions.

Take your time to explore our individual [Grow Your Own Fruit](#) guides on our website to understand all that it takes to grow fruit in the UK.

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The Process of Growing Fruit at the Allotment

Plot Conditions

Where you plant your fruit plants depends on the light, temperature, and exposure of your allotment plot. Before you begin planning and planting, make sure you fully understand what areas receive shade and sunlight.

Growing fruit of almost any type is possible under sunlight-rich sites. This includes [grapes](#), [figs](#), [peaches](#), [apricots](#), and [kiwi](#). For [growing strawberries](#), [cherries](#), [redcurrants](#), [whitecurrants](#), and [gooseberries](#), a shady spot is preferred.

Allotment gardeners with a fencing structure must be aware of 'rain shadows', areas that easily dry out even in rainy weather. The soil is quite dry in this part and needs adequate irrigation, or else plants may succumb to drought-like conditions.

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Planting & Pollinating

If you're a beginner at allotment growing, it often takes experimentation and practice. We'd recommend starting with the more hardy varieties of fruit that need little to no maintenance, like [blueberries](#).

Knowing the amount of time it takes to your fruit of choice at the allotment is also an important consideration. Late autumn or early spring is a great time for planting most fruit plants, however it does depend on the variety and weather conditions. When planting your fruit, ensure they are spaced adequately to facilitate enough circulation and growth.

Growing fruit needs adequate pollination from bees, flies, and wasps. While some fruit trees and plants produce compatible flowers and pollen that are self-fertile, many others produce incompatible flowers that need another tree's pollinating flowers. Flowering is a crucial time, so choose cultivars that are likely to flower simultaneously and lead to pollination.

Watering

Regular watering is important, particularly during hot and dry spells. Create a watering schedule to avoid overwatering or underwatering your plants and trees. Different fruits require different levels of water, especially during the first year.

You may need to check the moisture levels in the soil to avoid overwatering your fruit. One way to check for moisture content is by conducting a finger test. Just insert your finger in the soil up to your knuckle, if the soil feels dry, it means your plant needs water, but if it's moist, you can delay watering. Adding compost and mulching around the base of the plants can help your fruit plants retain and lock in moisture.

Pruning Fruit Plants

Pruning is often neglected but is a necessary horticulture process involving snipping and cutting branches that are broken, dead or crowding other branches. Moderate to light pruning of fruit trees is best done in summer months and when it starts to get colder.

Timely pruning can help maintain the uniformity of your plants and trees, promote fruit generation, and make harvesting convenient. It's worth understanding the specific pruning needs of your fruit trees and plants to encourage growth and ensure the best yield of fruit.

Controlling Pests and Diseases

Fruit plants and trees are susceptible to pests and diseases at various life stages. The most common pests affecting fruit plant growth are aphids, brown scales, pigeons, rabbits, raspberry beetles, scale insects, slugs, snails, vine weevils and winter moth caterpillars.

Grey mould, brown rot, blossom wilt, silver leaf, blossom wilt, and powdery mildew are some of the most common diseases affecting fruit cultivars.

Use organic pest control techniques such as [companion planting](#), organic pesticides and natural predators to control the growth of unwanted [pests and diseases](#). Browse our website to find the answers you need!

Harvesting Fruit and Using Produce

Harvesting is the most exciting time. Pick your fruit when it's nice and ripe and enjoy it in different ways.

The yield of your mature and healthy fruit plant depends on multiple factors, including the weather. On average, apples, pears, quinces, peaches and nectarines can yield from 9 to 22 kilograms per tree, while shrubs like currants and berries can yield anywhere from 1 to 4.5 kilograms per bush.

Besides having it fresh, here are some more ways to enjoy and store your fruit yield:

Allotment Fruit Preserves

Most fruit makes excellent preserves like jams and jellies. This is a great way to use up a large yield and preserve the produce for longer.

Freezing Your Allotment Fruit

Currants and raspberries can be frozen and defrosted when in need, staying as good as fresh. Fruits like plums can be frozen raw but best if cooked before consumption. Apples and pears need to be cooked first and then frozen.

Growing Apples at the Allotment



How to Grow Apples: A Detailed Guide

Growing apples is a firm favourite and are easy to grow. They come in a wide range of varieties but there are two main types - eating apples and cooking apples, which are what they say they are! While possible, it is of popular opinion that growing apples from seed takes too long.

If you want to join our online community, connect with likeminded growers and share your apple tree growing journey with us, sign up [here!](#)

When to Grow Apples

Knowing how to grow apples successfully involves understanding the right planting time. Bare-root apple trees can be planted from November through to March when the tree is dormant and provided the ground is not too frozen to dig. On the other hand, if you are considering container-grown apple trees, they can be planted year-round. However, the best time is still during the dormant season as it reduces stress on the tree.

Where to Grow Apples

Your chosen location for your apple tree should not shade other crops -, remember that they can grow very tall and wide! You may want to train your tree using supports or wiring. It is also possible to plant your apple tree in a large container if you want a more temporary solution.

How to Plant Apple Trees

Prepare the planting spot for your apple tree in advance, at least a few weeks before planting. Clear the weeds, add well-rotted organic matter into the soil, and ensure the site has good drainage. You will need to dig a hole as deep as the roots in a sunny spot avoiding very wet soil and allowing for roots to spread out in parameter.

How to Take Care of an Apple Tree

If you're unsure how to grow apples or are a beginner gardener, it's important to understand the time and effort that goes into it. Provide proper care often equates to the best results.

During spring, feed your apple tree with fertiliser that is rich in potassium, Cooking apple varieties are generally hungrier, so be generous.

Apple tree pruning should be done to encourage regrowth, but when to do this will depend on your variety and when it was planted. Generally, as a guide this is done in early spring but some you can do throughout the winter. Pruning helps the apple tree to produce a good crop, stay in good shape and allow air and sun to it.

Watering your apple tree is required throughout dry spells and when the fruit begins particularly for younger trees. Mature apple trees are usually more resilient.

The Different Ways to Use Apples

Besides enjoying them on their own, these versatile fruits can be used in many ways.

- Apples can be used in a variety of salads and coleslaw, adding a sweet crunch.
 - You can make delicious apple pies, tarts, gazettes and other desserts.
 - When you have an abundant harvest, you can even make apple jam or sauce to enjoy year-round.
 - On a hot summer's day, apples can make a refreshing glass of juice.
- These are just a few options. Check out all of our recipes [here](#)!

When and How to Harvest Apples

During the summer and into autumn your apple tree will be laden with fruit, some will naturally fall off if they are not picked. For optimal health you should look out for and pick off deformed and smaller fruit to allow room for larger, healthier apples.

Apples will pull off easily if they are ready and ripened, but not so easily if they are not ready. If you are unsure whether they are ready, one way of finding out is if the pips are brown inside. You should use fallen and bruised apples straight away.

How to Store Apples

Besides learning how to grow apples, you must also understand how to store them to enjoy them throughout the year. Ideally, you need to store the apples in single layers where possible, inspecting your crop for any issues before contaminating your crop. Some varieties can last for months if they are stored correctly. They should not be touching and are best wrapped in some tissue paper or similar and kept in a cool place.

There are so many different varieties that you will need to check for your specific variety for the best apple planting, pruning, harvesting and storing solutions and when to do it.

Growing Apples in the UK: A Summary

Planting Apples

- Plant bareroot trees during winter - early Spring
- Offer a sunny, well drained spot
- Add support/training

Growing Apples

- Add potassium rich fertiliser
- Prune your trees to encourage re-growth
- Water young trees during dry spells

Harvesting Apples

- Use fallen apples straight away
- Pick when easily pulled, regularly
- Store undamaged apples in single layers, without contact in a cool place

Popular Apple Varieties in the UK

•**M. Domestica - 'Scrumptious'** is a mid-season dessert red apple and is a self-fertile, disease resistant good pollinator and produces heavy crops of red apples, even on young trees

•**M. Domestica - 'Discovery'** is an early fruiting deciduous variety with bright crimson coloured fruits. Covered in white flowers throughout spring, followed by crisp, juicy dessert apples.

- M.Domestica** - '**Howgate Wonder**' does best in cooler but drier parts of the country. The fruit is very large, often enormous, with yellowish-green skin striped and flushed with brownish-red

Rootstocks for Apples

- M27** is an ideal choice for a smaller garden or container growing. A plentiful yield, even during the first year. Expect approximately 20lbs per tree
- M9** is a good dwarfing rootstock, ideal for cordon growing and you can expect approximately 30lbs yield per tree.
- M26** is great in lighter soils and is easily managed with excellent yields once it is established

Common Problems with Apples

- Aphids/greenfly** - Can be whitefly, rosy apple aphid, greenfly and woolly aphid
- Apple Scab** - A fungal disease that affects both the leaves and fruit with brown and black spots; espeically in wet conditions
- Canker** - Affects the branches and trunks with lesions, particularly in wet conditions

Exploring different varieties is part of the learning process. Share your apple variety here and update us on how your growing journey is going!

Where we meet

Johnson Park, Coronation Avenue, Yeovil. BA21 3DX

as well as

Brimsmore Gardens, Tintinhull Road, Yeovil, Somerset BA21 3NU

We generally meet twice a month. The last Thursday of the month is reserved for a committee meeting. We discuss all things related to the Association and deal with any matters arising.

We meet at 8pm on these nights in the lounge bar at Johnson Park Sports and Social Club. They have a car park

Minutes are recorded by our Secretary. The Chairman opens the meeting and directs us through the running order and as well as site supervisor's input there is a monthly Treasurer's report.

The other meeting night is a more social event and this takes place on the 1st Thursday of the month. We can invite a speaker, you can buy a drink at the bar and there is a raffle normally run by Phillip.

Three times a year on the 1st Wednesday of the month we meet at Brimsmore Garden Centre for our social. We meet in the Apple Tree restaurant at 6.30pm. Some tea and biscuits are available for free. We try to have a guest speaker at these events or a talk on a garden topic and a raffle run by Phillip's wife.

These three events replace our said Thursday social meetings at Johnson Park.

Your annual membership card gives you the time and dates of meetings for the year ahead. Our membership night for renewals is every March and again a discount night is offered for any garden centre items which are not on special offer.

Link to Brimsmore Garden Centre

We have a Gold Club discount deal with Brimsmore Garden Centre.

They offer all member's 25% discount on Spring bulbs for sale in October and then again a second deal for anything at the Centre that is not on special offer which can be used as many times as you want during January and February.

I have used it for compost in the past and the savings are quite good on your pocket. You can have the items delivered which is free within the Yeovil area or you can pick your items up at the Garden Centre.

Brimsmore Garden Centre website address :

<https://store.thegardensgroup.co.uk>

Email : brimsmore@thegardensgroup.co.uk

Telephone no. : 01935 411000

Address : Brimsmore Gardens
 Tintinhull Road
 Yeovil
 Somerset
 BA21 3NU

King Seeds - Top Tips for Seed Sowing

- Use seed sowing compost, not multi-purpose. Multi-purpose compost often contains too much feed which can damage or kill young seedlings before they grow.
- Water with fresh tap water. Avoid using saved rainwater for seeds and young seedlings, as pathogens can build up in water butts and containers which can affect germination. Rainwater is fine to use on established plants.
- Maintain the correct temperature. Ensure the seeds are kept at their ideal germination temperature.
- Monitor the water levels. Some composts may appear dry on the surface but are moist beneath. Certain seeds such as peas and beans tend to rot off if they are overwatered, yet if they are too dry, their seed coats may not break down properly, preventing germination.
- Water the drill directly when sowing outside during a dry spell. It is important when sowing seeds direct into the allotment soil when the soil is dry, to always water the seed drill first before sowing. Draw out the seed drill, then give a thorough watering so the base of the drill is really wet, then leave to drain for a few minutes before sowing the seed onto the wet soil. Once sown, the seed is then covered over with the dry soil, which traps the moisture below where the seeds need it to germinate. This is a far better method than constantly watering overhead with a rose on a can, which will evaporate with the sun or drying winds and put a hard cap over the soil, making it much harder for the seedlings to push through.

How to Contact the Editor

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

gareth.richards@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 Allotmenting and best wishes,

Gareth Richards
Treasurer
Eliz Flats, Plot 14



Editor : Gareth Richards – Treasurer
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