

This is the open pollinated cauli 'All Year Round'. It's the only variety that Stefanie grows. As she say's, its done ok for me so far, so why change. 'Bit of a traditionalist is Stefanie'.

'All Year Round'

[Now for my top tip](#)



This is the Asparagus beetle. They must be caught and destroyed before they breed.

If you move your finger towards the beetle they will disappear round the back of the stalk.



So the way to catch them is to hold your hand or a jam jar under the stalk and give it a tap. The beetle will fall into your hand and can then be destroyed. If you allow them to breed they will lay black eggs which turn into nasty little caterpillar's which destroy the asparagus foliage.

'The Courgette Trial'

I must say it is a bit of a worry when you are conducting a trial when you are only growing one plant of each variety.

Thankfully all the plants have survived their first two weeks out on the allotment. On 22nd May the net covers were removed and stakes were inserted behind each courgette. Several of the plants now have mini courgettes on them.

[Now another tip.](#)



When the first courgettes set close to the ground they often rot off from the flower end. If you remove the flower this will often stop the rot. The problem is that the flower holds water and this can lead to the onset of botrytis.

All of the plants have had a feed of Chempak No 2 high nitrogen feed. That will be continued every two weeks throughout the growing season.

If you are growing your courgettes up stakes, they will need to be tied in every two or three days. If you can't manage that, leave them to trail along the ground.

Lundy Cabbage

How about this for an unusual vegetable.

For my recent Big birthday bash, I took a group of my friends off to Lundy. After the Isle of Wight its my favourite island.

The Lundy cabbage is a bit of a novelty. Its not found any where else in the world. It's a primitive member of the brassica family.



Potato Blight

In our area in Southern England we have been receiving warnings from the on line site 'Blight Watch' that conditions are suitable for the sporulation of the blight fungus. Taking no chances I was down the allotment spraying my plants the same evening. Since the withdrawal of Ditane 945 we have only had Bordeaux Mixture to fall back on as a preventative measure. Now a new product is on the market produced by JBA potatoes. Its called Blight Guard and its available on line via Amazon.



It costs £18.00 and it claims to reduce the risk of potato blight but of course there is no guarantee of complete protection. But then that would apply to any product we might use. On the plus side, it is a fully organic product.

Crops in the polytunnel are romping along. I have been harvesting new potatoes 'Purple Eyed Seedling' planted up in February. Don't waste your time trying to grow 'Jersey Royals' they will never match the flavour of 'Purple Eyed Seedlings'.



Another vegetable that is doing rather well is the 'Sweet Candle' carrots. These could be pulled now for the table and they have been growing for just 11 weeks.

You can't beat a polytunnel for producing early crops. This is 'Sampson' calabrese. The great thing is that these will go on throwing side shoots for several weeks once the head has been cut.

Leek Moth

Exhibition growers will try anything to keep the dreaded leek moth at bay. How about moth balls, stuck on with Blue Tack. The damp proof collars will now be replaced with 12" long split pipe lagging.

Continuation of sowing is a must if you are going to make the most of your vegetable plot. Here I have a tray of red chard 'Charlotte', some of these will be grown on the allotment to full size and some will be grown in a tub and used to decorate a salad.



Chard 'Charlotte'

Time to remove those basal side shoots and damaged leaves from the runner beans.

My row of runner beans being grown for seed were looking a bit sad.



Other recent sowing I have made. Beetroot, variety 'Bettolo'. This is a new one from DT Brown. I have also sown a tray of French beans 'Hawkesbury Wonder'. As well as providing tasty beans for the house, I also hope to have some decent ones to make up a dish for the Southern Branch Championships.

I also have cauliflowers and calabrese plants ready to plant out. All I need now is a bigger veg plot.



Much better. A good tidy up was required.



This is the new Marshalls French Bean 'Satelit'. I was not impressed with the germination. Only 20 up out of 30 sown. I doubt if I am going to win a prize with this lot.



Main crop potatoes 'Maris Piper' and 'Picasso'. I can't grow main croppers on the allotment because of the Keeled slugs. The foliage will be supported and left to grow on until it turns yellow. Then the potatoes will go into a natural dormancy and will last longer in store.

More from me in a week or so.

John Trim