

At last, Julies Mini Cob sweetcorn have appeared. On the 17<sup>th</sup> July I harvested the first 'Swift' sweetcorn from my plot

To test if they are ripe push a nail into a corn, if the juice is creamy they are ready. If its clear give them another couple of days.



Delicious with a knob of butter. These went from plot to plate within an hour. That's the way to enjoy them at the peak of freshness. Shop bought ones just can't compete.

Not all the sweetcorn end up as a lunch time snack. My wife sally turns many of them into Sweetcorn Relish. That's a good way to use up the surplus and not so perfect cobs.



#### Show Perfection Peas

Peas. It's not looking to good for the Southern Branch Championships. Unless the judge likes them crispy.

#### Pickled Walnuts

A few week ago I gathered these walnuts from a friend's garden. On previous excursions we have had to obtain them by the scrumping method. The cut off point for picking green walnuts is the 15<sup>th</sup> July. You must be able to push a thick needle right through the middle of them. If you can't do that they will never pickle. These have had four days in brine.



## The Southern Branch Championships

2nd with my **Gogorez** peppers. They weighed 279 grams. Beaten by Sherie Plumb. Hers Weighed 281 grams. DRAT!



As usual her **Stenner** runner beans were unbeatable. Sherie also went on to win the large collection of 5 vegetables and many other prizes. The photos of the show can be viewed on the NVS Face book site.

Fantastic beans in what has been a difficult year for many growers.



Mark Hall made the journey down from the Midlands. Amongst his wins were this cracking dish of pickling shallots.

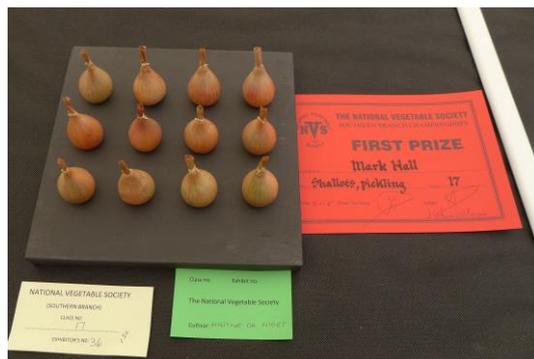
Sherie had an incredible show.

This is her winning entry in the South of England Potato Championship.

I was pleased to see that she had **Purple Eyed Seedling** amongst the varieties. One of my all time favourites.



I did have the odd success, at least I got a first with my garlic.



**Red Dragon** tomatoes. Could these be future National Winners. I have been looking for a replacement for **Cedrico**. Well done to Brian, a cracking dish of tomatoes.

There was only one issue that left me a bit miffed. Some low life walked off with one of my beefsteak tomatoes during the night. In the past we have had the odd issue with tampering. For the Nationals next year I think we shall have a security guy on duty.

### Christmas Potatoes

Mid July. The first lot sown were **Jazzy**. I used the old exhibition potato compost enriched with a couple of ounces of Vitax Q4 per pot. For two weeks they were kept cool in the shade beneath one of our apple trees.



This photo was taken on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. The **Jazzy** are well under way. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August I planted up the **Cherie** variety.



The beans have been allowed to run to seed and once the outside skins started to dry I lifted them and hung them up to dry. The hot dry summer has helped and this lot will be shucked out in early August. Once shucked I will Pop them into a thick brown paper bag and store them in the bottom of the fridge.



Half fill the pot, nestle a tuber into the compost and top up to the rim with more compost. Give a good watering. I cover them with wire netting to stop the squirrels digging them up.



**Aquilon French Beans** for next years' seed



### Trimming the blanch leek seedheads

I generally trim the heads at the beginning of August. Just when I see the first mini leeks poking through the seed. In a couple of weeks the head will produce small leeks or grass as it is commonly called.

Make sure you support the head with a good stake. If you have a suitable fungicide spray the heads against rust. They will be grown on until the stalk rots through which could be anytime from October onwards.



### Ongoing Jobs

This weekend I shall make my last sowing of runner beans. It pays to use a white or bi coloured variety such as [White Emergo](#) or [Moonlight](#). This is because by the time this sowing sets flowers pollinating insects could be in short supply. The varieties I have mentioned are not self fertile but they are self pollinators a trait that is missing in the scarlet runner variety of bean.



### Things to sow

This weekend I shall make sowings of calabrese and winter cauliflower. And also a last sowing of Little Gem lettuce. Next month we shall be looking at the winter varieties.

### Aubergines

Bumper crops this year.

The foliage has been kept super clean by the application of phytoseiulus, an organic way to control red spider mite. Also it is not horrendously expensive.

In the next article I shall be lifting my main crop potatoes on the allotment.

Back in a week or so.

John Trim