

My seed potatoes have eventually arrived. Most were okay but I do have one or two gripes.

You would never select a potato like this at your local garden centre 'would you'. A very bad case of common scab.



And in another bag the whole lot were tiddlers like the one on the left of the picture. It is legal to sale as it is just over the minimum requirement of 35mm. Personally I prefer to plant something a little larger like the **Picasso** on the right.

Anyway I have rectified the problem by buying more stock of suitable quality at my local garden centre.

On a more positive note I dug out a few Casablanca from store to grow on for my super early potatoes.

I used my old potato compost from last year, enriched with Vitax Q4. 2 or 3 oz to a large pot is enough nutrient. Cover them to a depth of 4" and keep them somewhere warm, minimum 10c until they sprout. Mine go under the bench in the heated greenhouse.



Pot Leeks

In the last article I mentioned smoothing down the flags on a pot leek. I hold the tip of the flag in my left hand and run my index finger along the underside of the flag. As I said this helps to restrict the blanch on the leek.

The leeks in the cabinet are Pendle Improved and doing very well. They have now been taken out as the flags were touching the fluorescent bulbs. The bulbs do give off some heat and the flags can get scorched if left in contact with the bulbs.

The cabinet has now become home to the exhibition onions.



These are **Vento** onions growing on for the 250g class. They won't be going into the cabinet but they will get a position in good light. Those bent stems will straighten out in time. The compost in the pots is a mix of Levington M3 and graded top soil. They will now grow on in these 1.5 litre pots to maturity.

Celery. This is Morning Star

The plants were through in seven days from sowing. I give them a spray of water twice a day to keep them moist. They may seem tiny at the moment but they will soon get going.



The early sown tomatoes are ready for potting up, now that they have set a true pair of leaves about the cotyledons.

They will go into small square pots with Levington M2 compost aerated with fine vermiculite.

Sowings under way are **Marathon** Calabrese, cabbage **Red Drumhead**, beetroot **Boltardy** and **Red Barron** onions.

The first sowing of carrot will be made this weekend. An early variety whose name escapes me for the moment and **Sweet Candle**. The carrots will be grown under cover. If you are tempted to sow some carrots make sure the temperature is a minimum of 8c. If not, warm the soil by covering with black plastic.

That's it for now. I shall put together something for next weekend when I shall be sowing the Parsnips.



John Trim