

The South Hobart Sowing Guide

	The sun and nitrogen loving Cucurbits - sweet corn, pumpkin, cucumber, zucchini, celery, sunflower. Plant tall plants on the south or east side of garden so they don't shade other plants from direct sun. Ideal pH of around 6 - 7.5.	The root crop bed - carrots, parsnips, beetroot, coriander, parsley, silver beet, spinach. Spinach will bolt if planted in a hot bed/spot. Root crops like an alkaline soil, so add a bit of lime and hold back on the manure (if you add fresh manure the root crops will fork).	The Brassica bed - broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, brussel sprouts, radish and lettuce. These need a cooler part of the garden if planted for summer crops or they will bolt. Brassicas are heavy feeders of sulphur and they love a bed rich in nitrogen.	The legume bed - peas, beans, snow peas, broad beans, runner beans, climbing beans, snake beans and okra, spring onion. Feed legume crops dolomite often. They leave the soil loaded with nitrogen which is perfect for the following brassicas.	The onion bed - shallots, garlic, leeks, potato onions, long-keeping onions, salad onions and red onions, chives, coriander. These plants love a nice, hot bed. Ideal pH of around 6.5, excellent drainage, and soil with ample humus. Apply dolomite before planting.	The tomato bed - tomatoes, basil, eggplants and capsicums and chillies. These plants love a hot acidic bed, so feed and manure well (not chicken poo though and no lime).
July Crop rotation month	Having a rotation-style veggie garden can help keep your soil healthy and avoid disease but feel free to use this guide in anyway you wish (many people do not have space for 6 beds so simply plant everything together each year). The six year cycle of one vegetable bed will look like this - sow tender vegies such as sweet corn, pumpkin, cucumber and zucchini in a bed that was previously occupied by root crops. After these have had their turn, the soil will have started to turn acidic so next it will be onto to the tomatoes and capsicums, which love those conditions. Then, after another dose of lime, it will be the onions' turn. After the onions the bed will be occupied by legumes (peas and beans) the following year, because they also love alkaline soil. The legumes will fill the soil with nitrogen so they can be followed by leaf vegies such as cabbages, cauliflower, broccoli and lettuces (that love nitrogen filled soil). Following that will be the root crops (carrots, parsnips and beetroot) that don't need much manure. The following season after the chickens have had a few weeks scratching the bed and added lots of nitrogen rich fertiliser, the bed will be sown with sweet corn, pumpkin, cucumber and zucchini again.					
August	Plant sturdy young seedlings of celery.	Turnips, swedes, beetroot, spinach, silver beet. Plant: long-keeping salad.	Slash bean stalks and dig them in. Asian brassicas, cabbage, lettuce, cauliflower, broccoli.	Peas (including snow peas), broad beans.	Onions (brown, salad). PLANT: shallots, potato onions, divisions of chives, sturdy leek seedlings.	Plant tomatoes in pot in a north facing window sill.
September	Under glass in containers: pumpkin, zucchini and sweet corn. Plant celery.	Asian greens, mustard, silver beet, spinach, beetroot, parsnip, swede, turnip.	Cabbages, cauliflower, broccoli, Asian brassica, radishes, lettuce.	Peas, climbing beans, broad beans.	Leek, onion, brown onions. Plant divisions of chives and salad onion.	Transfer tomatoes to bigger pots, with lots of manure.
October	Cucumber, pumpkins, squash, zucchini, celery, sunflowers.	Carrots, silver beet, spinach, beetroot, swede, parsnip. Thin carrots to 2 and then 4 inches apart as they grow.	Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, radishes, Asian greens, mustard, lettuce.	Beans (bush, climbing, shelling, broad), peas, spring onions.	Salad onions, leek. Plant divisions of chives.	If warm enough, eggplant, capsicum, tomato.
November	Celery, pumpkin, winter squash, sweet corn, zucchini, sunflowers, cucumber.	Swede, summer spinach, beetroot, carrot, parsnip, turnip, silver beet.	Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, Asian brassicas, cauliflower, kale, radish, Asian greens, mustard, lettuce.	Beans (bush, climbing, shelling, broad), peas, spring onions.	Leek, salad onion.	Eggplant, capsicum, tomato.
December	Celery, sweet corn, pumpkin, winter squash, zucchini sunflowers, cucumber.	Carrots, beetroot, swede, parsnip, turnip, silver beet, spinach in a cool part of garden or it will bolt.	Broccoli, cabbages, cauliflower, radishes, Brussels sprouts, kale, Asian greens, mustard, radish, lettuce.	Beans (bush, climbing, shelling), broad beans in cool spot in garden, peas, spring onions.	Leek, salad onion.	Eggplant, capsicum and tomato. They will be ready to harvest three to four months later.
January	Late sweet corn, celery, cucumber, pumpkin. Pumpkins can be planted in poor soil but love manure.	Carrot (main winter-spring crop), turnip, beetroot, silver beet, parsnip, late swede.	Broccoli, winter cabbages, cauliflower, Asian brassica, radish, Brussels sprouts, lettuce.	Spring onions. Harvest beans when ready, slash stalks and dig to a shallow depth.	Asian greens, mustard, leek.	
February		Carrots, beetroot, Asian greens and roots, mustard, silver beet, turnip, Asian, parsnip, silver beet, late swede (risky).	Cabbages, cauliflower, green and purple sprouting broccoli, Asian brassica, radish, late Brussels sprouts and lettuce.	Spring onion.	Asian greens, mustard, leek.	
March		Beetroot, spinach, silver beet, parsnip (early in month), turnip, Asian root vegies.	Cabbages, cauliflower, radish and lettuce, Asian brassica. PLANT: broccoli.	Spring onions.	Salad onion, chives and leeks.	
April		Spinach	Sugarloaf cabbage (to mid month), Asian brassica, winter lettuce. PLANT: mini-cauliflower, broccoli.	Spring onions, broad beans,	Salad onions, seedlings of salad plant late leeks, chives.	
May			Asian brassicas. PLANT: Broccoli.	Spring onions, broad beans,		
June			In containers under glass or indoors: cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli to raise seedlings for August planting.	Spring onions, broad beans, peas		

Where space becomes available after harvesting, sow green manure or chicken food (mustard, spinach, silver beet, clover, sub-clover, chicory, pyrethrum, comfrey, sunflowers). Warm season green mulch includes pintoe peanut, cow pea, mung beans. When ready slash the mulch and let the chickens in to plough and fertilise the bed.

In a separate bed plant potatoes from August (early, frost-free districts only) to November. Garlic can be planted from April through to August. Asparagus should be cut to the ground and mulched with seaweed or manure in May and/or planted in June to December. Rhubarb divisions and globe artichoke suckers can be planted from June to December. Jerusalem artichokes can be planted from June to September. Don't plant garlic and potatoes together. Fertilise the beds well before planting. Plant asparagus where it can stay for 15 years, rhubarb for 3 years, garlic for 6 months, potatoes for 5 months.

Fruit Trees

Fruit Trees and berries - most fruit trees, including apple, pear, peach and cherry trees, prefer neutral to slightly acidic soil, with an ideal range between 6.0 and 6.5. Citrus trees can tolerate more alkaline soils, growing well in soil that has a pH between 6.0 and 8.0. An acceptable soil pH for currants and berries is between 5.5 and 7.0, (pH 6.1-6.6 is best). Berries also love cool roots. Blueberries are a notable exception, preferring acidic soil with a pH around 5.0. Blueberries have shallow roots and don't like chickens scratching, nor do they like chicken poo so fence these off separately from the rest of the fruit plants.

August	Treat leaf curl on peach and nectarine. Fertilise all fruit trees including citrus and berries, continue winter-pruning all fruit trees (including citrus if necessary). Plant new fruit trees and berries, clean up around old strawberry plants, start winter-pruning all fruit trees,
September	Give each side of your apple trees a large shovelful of blood and bone and another shovelful of dolomite because apples have a high calcium requirement but don't take it up efficiently. A couple of applications of trace elements in early spring will keep your apple tree healthy. Mulch under blueberries with a mixture of manure (not chicken manure) and pine needles. Plant companion plants.
October	Continue mulching under fruit trees and at the end of October feed all trees and shrubs lightly with horse manure and composted hay from chook-pens.
November	Continue mulching under fruit trees. Foliar feed citrus trees with seaweed spray in the morning (once), deep-water once a week.
December	Thin out apple and pear trees. Start summer-pruning fruit trees. Deep water once a week.
January	Summer prune cherries/apples/pears in late January. Cut shoots back to a stub of about 2-3 buds.. Continue to hand-thin apples and pears. Deep-water once a week. Feed all trees lightly with horse manure and composted hay from chook-pens.
February	Check for damaged fruit deep-water once a week, feed all trees lightly with horse manure and composted hay from chook-pens. Throw on a couple of handfuls of blood and bone and trace elements around your apple trees. If necessary prune berries after picking is finished.
March	Plant daffodils, jonquils and other spring bulbs. Spread horse manure and composted hay from chook-pens.
April	Mulch under blue berries with pine needles. Remove codling moth traps and clean. Prune blueberries and autumn raspberries, cut out old branches out of blackcurrant bushes, clean strawberry beds, plant new strawberries. A couple of applications of trace elements in mid-autumn will keep your apple tree healthy.
May	Mulch under blue berries with a mixture of manure and pine needles. Plant new strawberries, transplant raspberry plants (late May). Slash the ground cover and leave the plants on the beds, bring in the chickens to plough bed (not near blueberries).
June	Plant new fruit trees and berries, clean up all beds, leave cut flowers and herbs as mulch (away from tree trunks).

Managing Soil pH

Basically soil pH is a measure of the amount of lime (calcium) contained in your soil, and the type of soil that you have. It affects the plants ability to take in nutrients and the soil must be adjusted to suit the plant which will occupy that area if it is not already within that plants requirement range. A soil with a pH lower than 7.0 is an acid soil and one with a pH higher than 7.0 is alkaline. If you have highly acidic soil, you can raise the pH and neutralise the soil by adding dolomite in autumn. This is the best way of maintaining lime balance and keeps releasing for 5 years. Alternatives are wood ash or finely ground oyster or egg shells. Lowering pH for acid loving plants, like blueberries, can be achieved by applying compost, composted manure, elemental sulphur or pine needles.

Pest Control

There are many organic ways to deal with plant pests that do not reduce life in the soil. If plants are weakened because of unsatisfactory care, they will become targets for pests. Healthy alive soil is the basis of plant health and its capacity to resist pests and diseases. Keeping good moisture levels, rotating crops, mulching and fertilising are all very important. Care for your soil by lightly adding compost, manure and organic fertiliser to your beds before planting in Spring and Summer. Allow the organic matter to build up in the soil. Having plants not too close together, not watering the leaves, removing diseased leaves and fruit, strategic pruning, companion planting and beneficial flowers are helpful practices in keeping common diseases under control. Control slugs and snails by squashing them at night. Use Dipel on brassica against cabbage white fly, if necessary. Apply white oil once every three weeks for three months during spring to manage common citrus problems including aphids and leaf miners on new growth, scale insects on old leaves, and black sooty mould on the fruit and foliage. Be sure to cover the whole tree including the bark. Use Tanglefoot pest barrier to keep ants away from your cherry trees, aphids will not thrive without the help of ants. Check trees for pear and cherry slugs throughout growing season and if necessary spray with a product such as Success. In Nov and Dec spray apple and pear trees against fungus with a product such as Limil if necessary and place codling moth traps onto the apple trees. Spray peach and nectarine trees that had leaf-curl with a product such as Bordeaux in April-June.

Companion Planting

Some companion plants attract beneficial insects, some repel predators and some are even said to affect the flavour of edible fruits. Companion planting adds visual interest to your yard and garden, with flower plants and vegetables colourfully mingled together. Allow them to flower profusely and try to lengthen their flowering period with judicious pruning. Plant a selection of the following plants (taking roughly 5% of the beds) through spring and summer in all beds as companion plants - oregano, nasturtium, valerian, marigold, calendula, peppermint, spearmint, edible chrysanthemums, pyrethrum, cosmos, other daisies, Queen Anne's lace, sweet alyssum, Sweet Alice, borage, chamomile and sunflower (ants herd aphids onto sunflowers, keeping them off neighbouring plants). A more permanent area for longer lived companion plants should be set aside close by and planted with sage, lovage, wormwood, tarragon, rosemary, zinnias, mint, thyme, geraniums, comfrey and lavender.

Around the fruit trees sow (don't plant because some roots may be shallow - e.g. citrus) a selection of the following - comfrey, yarrow, calendulas, wormwood, nasturtiums, fox glove, sweet woodruff, lavender, southernwood, tansy, lemon balm and basil. Or plant green mulch (although not right near the trunks - mulch instead) such as oats and lucerne (alfalfa), which are slashed a number of times over the spring and summer to reduce competition for nutrients and water.

Grapevine companions include comfrey, lucerne (great to cut for mulch too), geraniums, clover, oregano, sage, hyssop, mustard, tansy and basil. Strawberry plants like borage, pyrethrum and feverfew. Raspberry canes go well with tansy, marigolds and rue.

Chicken Care

Chickens are great for a sustainable fruit and vegetable garden. They plough the beds, scratch organic matter into the soil, eat pests and fertilise the bed. They also provide eggs, meat and nitrogen rich fertiliser. Chooks are relatively easy to look after, however there are some important chores to remember to keep your chooks happy and laying well.

Always ensure that chickens have access to plenty of fresh water, they drink a lot! They need shell grit to digest their food. They need their greens every day. They need enough room to free range and to use areas in rotation, this will help them remain disease free. They may need treatment for lice, mites and worms throughout the year (garlic is a natural worming agent and can be ground up and added to the chooks drinking water, and allowing the fowls the opportunity to take a dust bath as they wish is a great way to avoid lice). Straw can be used for floor litter in the coop and cleaning can be done weekly and water containers washed and dirty or wet litter replaced. If you have the space and a pond, ducks (such as the Indian Runners) are also great for the veggie garden.

Seeds	Emerge (days)	Harvest (weeks)
Basil		10-12
Beans (climbing, runner, snake)		9-11
Beetroot	10-14	10-12
Broad Beans	10-14	18-20
Broccoli	6-10	8-10
Brussel Sprouts	6-10	16-20
Cabbages	6-10	8-16
Cape Gooseberries	14-28	20-24
Capsicum	10-14	10-16
Carrots	10-21	12-16
Cauliflower	10-21	15-22
Celery	14-21	20-22
Chillies		9-11
Chives		7-11
Coriander		30-45
Cucumbers	6-10	8-12
Eggplant	10-14	8-12
Garlic (bulbs)		25
Kale	5-8	7-9
Leeks	10-14	12-20
Lettuce	6-7	8-12
Onions	10-14	24-32
Parsley		9-19
Peas	7-10	14-16
Potatoes		16-20
Pumpkin		15-20
Radish	2-3	5-7
Rhubarb	10-21	16-20
Rocket		21-35
Silver beets	10-14	8-12
Spinach	10	5-11
Spring Onion	10-14	8-12
Squashes	6-19	12-14
Strawberry	seedlings	1 year
Sunflower		10-11
Sweet Corn	6-10	12-16
Tomatoes	10-14	12-20
Turnip	7-10	6-9
Zucchini	6-10	8-14