

What to do this month at your plot - June

June is the last month for sowing many crops as we pass the longest day and head downhill again. Planting out from successional sowings in modules and pots is maximising the use of your space but you are probably wondering where to fit things in by now. Don't be too precious about rotational plans, plans are great until they bump head with reality

Sowing & Planting in June on the Vegetable Plot

Direct Sowing

In dry weather draw your drill and water it well prior to sowing and then just water with a fine rose after to settle the seeds in.

Successional sowing each fortnight of **beetroot, French beans, early carrots, kohlrabi, early peas, lettuce, rocket, turnips, endive, radish, spring onions** will give you a constant supply of salads and vegetables at their peak for your plate.

- **French and Runner Beans**
- **Maincrop peas**
- **Beetroot**
- **Carrots**
- **Turnips**
- **Swedes**
- **Cauliflowers**
- **Chicory**
- **Endive**
- **Kohlrabi**
- **Sweetcorn**
- **Squash**
- **Courgette and Marrows**

Planting Out

If you started brassicas in pots, especially if you have **clubroot**, then it's time to plant out.

- **Broccoli**
- **Calabrese**
- **Brussels sprouts**
- **Summer cabbage**

Pot grown **runner and dwarf beans** should be safe to plant out now as the danger of frost should be past. Outdoor **tomatoes** can also go into their final position. Don't just move them straight from the greenhouse or they'll be checked. Use a cold frame to condition them or move them back into the house at night for a few days before they are planted outside.

Your **leeks** may well be ready now, about pencil thickness. I like to plant mine as a follow on to the early potatoes which will be up by the end of the month. When transplanting leeks

don't follow the old advice of chopping the top foliage and roots back, it doesn't do any good.

Cultivation, Pests & Problems

Most likely you'll need to water if the weather is dry and bright. Don't just lightly sprinkle each day, it helps pests like slugs and encourages shallow rooting. Water when the soil is dry a few inches below the surface (stick your finger in to see) thoroughly – about 10 litres per square metre. This should last at least a week of hot, dry weather.

Watch out for slugs & snails. Whether you use pellets, traps, biological controls or just pick them off doesn't matter as long as you keep on top of the problem

The butterflies are about now as well. Beautiful as they are, check the undersides of your **brassica** leaves for the yellow or white eggs that will hatch into caterpillars and devastate the plant. You can squash them, wipe or wash them off easily at this stage.

Fruit

If we do get a prolonged dry spell, don't forget that that fruit bushes and trees need watering. Swelling **apples** and **currants** need water as much as leafy vegetables. Once again, give a good soaking rather than little sprinkles that encourage surface rooting.

In June apples have the "**June Drop**" where the tree drops excess fruit. After this it is worth thinning out if the branches are still overcrowded. Tie in **blackberry canes** as they grow and check netting, fruit cages etc have no access for the birds.

When you've had the last **rhubarb**, give them a good feed by mulching with well-rotted manure mixed with compost or an artificial like growmore to enable them to build strength for next year.

In the Greenhouse / Polytunnel

Keep pinching off the side shoots with your **tomatoes** and keep an eye out for pests such as aphids, whitefly, red spider mite. If you are subject to attack by these pests it is worth checking out biological controls as these are perfectly safe to use and, used correctly, more effective than traditional chemical controls. Many of the chemical controls of the past are no longer available anyway so the organic alternatives are now the mainstream choice.