

# VEGETABLE GROWING AND WHERE TO START

Thenford Deputy Head gardener Emma Thick, has written this article on behalf of Boddington Sustainability Group & Boddington & District Gardeners Association.

I've worked everywhere from organic walled gardens to more suburban plots growing vegetables and fruit in many conditions and these days it's never been so easy to start. So many varieties of vegetables have been created now for smaller gardens and even window boxes and pots .

So this may seem like a silly thing to say but grow what you will use and what you like , my dear sister once grew a great crop of onions...she hates onions!

Nowadays you can even skip the potentially daunting seed sowing stage and pop to your local garden centre for your pre germinated plants which just need to go in the ground or pot.

If you do attempt to grow things from seed don't be tempted to sow it all at once and end up with a hundred lettuce all ready at once (again my dear sister ate a lot of lettuce that week ) It is better to stagger the sowing times weeks apart to you never end up with too much.

Some vegetables are perennial which means they come up every year, such as asparagus and rhubarb. Such things are worth donating a little space for even in a flower bed as they do look quite ornamental when you aren't harvesting them.

So without writing paragraphs on which plants you can grow where I will just say this , many varieties now have been created that you can easily grow in pots. Be it potatoes, lettuce or tomatoes, you can even consider dwarf peas or dwarf french beans. Even some carrots can be. The thing to remember is if it's in a pot or window box you will need to water it regularly.

If you are growing from seeds the back of the packet will have all the instructions on. If you don't have a greenhouse or anywhere under cover you can just



direct sow the seeds into the ground about late May when the risk of most of the frosts have gone.

As for what to plant in a new veg plot again it's personal to you , don't be if it's your first go disappointed by a crop failure or a potential glut of courgettes it happens to us all. But trust me nothing tastes as nice as something you have grown yourself.

You will get setbacks, somethings may do better in your soils than others it's a learning process not a race. And don't feel bad if you can't feed a family from your back garden.

Also if you have a glut of anything you can always give it away to friends or family. And many vegetables can be frozen or preserved in other ways.

So have ago, you might surprise yourself with what you can achieve in a small space.

Emma Thick is Deputy Head Gardener at Thenford arboretum

See website for upcoming open days and to book tickets.  
<https://www.thenfordarboretum.com/>

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## How to Join the BDGA

You can join the Boddington & District Gardeners' Association when you come along to a meeting or email Barbara at [bridyad@icloud.com](mailto:bridyad@icloud.com)

## Don't forget the following visits the BDGA have arranged

- 17 June: A visit to Thenford (Lord and Lady Heseltine's garden)
- 20 July: A private visit to Broughton Castle