

# Summer garden guide

Expert advice from *Jon Lamb*



## Vegetable planting guide

It's not too late to plant a wide range of summer vegetables. Adding compost or soil improver before planting will help retain moisture on very hot days.

VEGETABLE	EARLY SUMMER	LATE SUMMER	SEED ONLY	WATER
Beetroot		√	√	xx
Broccoli*	√	√		xx
Cabbage*	√	√		xx
Capsicum	√			xx
Carrots	√	√	√	xx
Cucumber	√	√		xxx
Eggplant	√			xx
Lettuce - hearting	√	√		xxx
Lettuce - non-hearting	√	√		xxx
Melons	√			xxx
Pumpkin	√			xxx
Radish	√	√	√	xxx
Rocket	√	√		xxx
Silverbeet	√	√		xx
Sweetcorn	√			xxx
Tomato	√	√		xx
Zucchini	√	√		xxx

\* select quick maturing hybrid varieties

## Summer pruning

Young fruit trees that have made strong, healthy growth this season should be summer pruned in the next few weeks. This will save removing and wasting excessive growth next winter. It will also help the tree to mature earlier than normal.

## Pest watch

Try to keep spraying to a minimum. During summer, hot weather and natural predators often keep damaging insects in check.

PEST	LIKELY TARGETS	SOFT OPTION TREATMENTS
<b>CHERRY SLUG</b>	Stone and berry producing trees - leaves skeletonised.	Spray with Success or pest oil when day temperatures will be below 30C.
<b>CODLIN MOTH</b>	Apples and pears - holes in fruit.	Pheromone traps can reduce insect populations. Spraying Success (non-toxic) monthly is also effective.
<b>EARWIGS</b>	Found throughout the garden - particularly where mulch is used. Holes in leaves and petals.	Regular trapping will reduce adult populations and help control breeding.
<b>LEAF MINOR</b>	Citrus, plants with large soft leaves. Irregular tracks across leaves.	Spray with pest oil during cool weather.
<b>MEALY BUG</b>	Houseplants, box hedges. Yellow leaves, stunted growth.	Try pest oil - if pests persist, drench roots with imidacloprid*.
<b>MITES</b>	Roses, tomatoes and plants in glasshouses. Leaves dry, turn yellow and drop.	Soap based insecticides will reduce numbers as will pest oil.
<b>SCALE</b>	Citrus, roses, many thick stemmed shrubs. Plant vigour reduced.	Easily controlled with pest oil. Don't spray in hot weather.
<b>WHITE FLY</b>	Tomatoes, beans and soft leaved plants grown in shade. Leaves become sticky - stunted growth.	Spray pest oil or Confidor. Target the insect's juvenile stage i.e. small opaque scale on back of leaves.

\* imidacloprid = Confidor, Conguard, Bug Kill

## It's not too late to plant tomatoes

Try planting out three or four well established tomato seedlings before Christmas. In most seasons, December and even January planting is very successful.

If possible, establish these plants during a cool spell or early in the evening. They may need to be shaded for the first week. However, once established, growth will be rapid and the bushes should be fruiting in late February and during March when harvest from early plantings is often coming to an end.

If you protect these plants from fungal diseases and mites (by regular dusting or spraying), water well and choose heat tolerant varieties that also have good tolerance to cold (i.e. Burnley Bounty, SA Mighty Red, Apollo Improved and most truss tomatoes that are late season performers), you could be picking tomatoes right through autumn depending on where you live.



## Watering

With holidays and other festivities, the vegetable garden can be overlooked and watering can become irregular. Uneven watering can cause the bottom of tomatoes to turn black (blossom end rot), lettuce to turn bitter and beans, zucchinis and other flowering crops to stop producing.

## Red spider mite

Found on the back of tomato leaves, strawberries, roses and other plants, red spider mite can cause considerable damage when there are large numbers and conditions are hot and dry. If spraying is necessary, try one of the newer soap based products.

# Summer garden guide

Expert advice from *Jon Lamb*



## Summer colour

Most summer annuals need regular watering to produce a top display.

ANNUAL	SUN	SEMI SHADE	WATER	CONTAINER
Amaranthus	√		x	
Bedding begonias		√	xx	√
Coleus		√	xxx	√
Cosmos (dwarf)	√		xx	√
Dahlia	√		xxx	
Impatiens		√	xxx	√
Petunia	√	√	xx	√
Portulaca	√		x	√
Salvia	√	√	xx	√
Snapdragon (dwarf)	√	√	xx	√
Vinca	√		xxx	√
Zinnia	√		xx	√



## Herbs

During summer, most herbs perform best when shaded from afternoon sun.

HERB	SUMMER SUN	SEMI SHADE	WATER	EASY TO GROW
Basil	√	√	xxx	9
Chives	√	√	x	10
Coriander		√	xxx	6
Mint		√	xx	10
Oregano	√	√	xxx	7
Parsley		√	xxx	7
Rocket	√	√	xxx	8
Rosemary	√		x	10

1 = hard 10 = very easy

## Roses need a tidy up

Remove the old flower heads from your rose bushes to encourage plants to send out new growth and help keep the bushes in shape. Roses will stop growing if they run short of water, so keep the roots moist.



## Caterpillars

Can be controlled by spraying with Success which is non-toxic to all but caterpillars.

## Spray drift

Spray drift from weedicides, particularly those having a hormone or systemic action, can cause serious damage to nearby plants. Don't spray when it is windy.

another deep watering after harvest. If the crop was heavy and small, water in one or two kilograms of balanced fertiliser.

## Street trees

If you have shady trees in your street, you will probably make a great deal of use of them over the next few months. How about giving them a long, slow drink over the next few days?

## Citrus

Citrus love the warm weather, but their moisture absorbing roots are near the soil's surface. These trees should be watered regularly at this time of the year, applying at least 200 litres each time. Incidentally, the best dressed citrus trees should be wearing a thick mulch over their root system this summer.

## Weeds

Don't let weeds spoil the forthcoming holidays. Spend a few minutes on weekends and remove or spray those growing in the garden at the moment. It is a good time to spray perennial weeds such as couch and nut grass if you intend using the systemic herbicide, glyphosate.

## Pelargoniums

Bushes that have finished flowering should be trimmed back lightly by removing old flower stems and thinning crowded branches. Feed with liquid fertiliser and soak the roots well to encourage new growth for autumn cuttings.

## Fruit trees

Fruit trees bearing apricots, plums, peaches and nectarines have had to work hard to bring their crops up to size because of the dry season. Give the trees a long soak a week before harvest and

## Fallen fruit

Ripe fruit that falls to the ground can harbour insects and disease. It should be removed regularly to prevent infestation of later maturing crops.

## Christmas gifts

If you are giving a plant for Christmas, make sure it is watered well before wrapping. If you receive a plant, check the soil immediately. If it needs watering, soak the container in a bucket of water for 15 minutes.



## Water frequency guide - vegetables

Keep vegetables well watered and where possible, water just before a spell of hot weather.

Temperature	Water rating	Soil	PLANT SIZE		
			Number of weekly applications		
			Small	Medium	Large
18-25°	Low	Sandy	2	1	1
		Clay	1	1	1
25-30°	Medium	Sandy	2	2	1
		Clay	2	1	1
30-35°	High	Sandy	3	2	2
		Clay	2	2	1
35°+	Extra	Sandy	3+	3	2
		Clay	3	2	1