

Beetroot



Choose a sunny spot. Dig in autumn or early winter. Add well-rotted compost if humus content is low. Lime if the soil is acidic. In spring prepare the seed bed and rake in Growmore fertiliser 2-3 weeks prior to sowing.

Sowing Time

Mid-April-June.



Crop Care

When seedlings are about 1" high, thin out to leave a single plant at each station. Protection against birds may be necessary at this stage. The ground must be kept weed-free. Use a hoe, taking care not to touch the roots. Dryness leads to woodiness, so water moderately at fortnightly intervals during dry spells. Mulching will help to conserve moisture. When roots have reached a golf ball size pull up alternate plants and use in cooking. Leave the remainder to reach maturity.

Harvesting

Pull out globe varieties as required. They should not be left to grow larger than a cricket ball or have white rings when the root is cut in half.

Swede

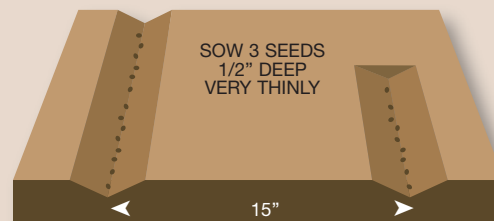


Sowing Seed

Swedes are brassicas and like other members of the family they need firm, non-acid soil, which has reasonable drainage. Pick a sunny spot and dig in autumn. Lime if necessary. In spring apply Growmore fertiliser, then prepare the seed bed about a week later. Apply a nematode-based insecticide if cabbage root fly is a known problem.

Sowing Time

May-June.



Crop Care

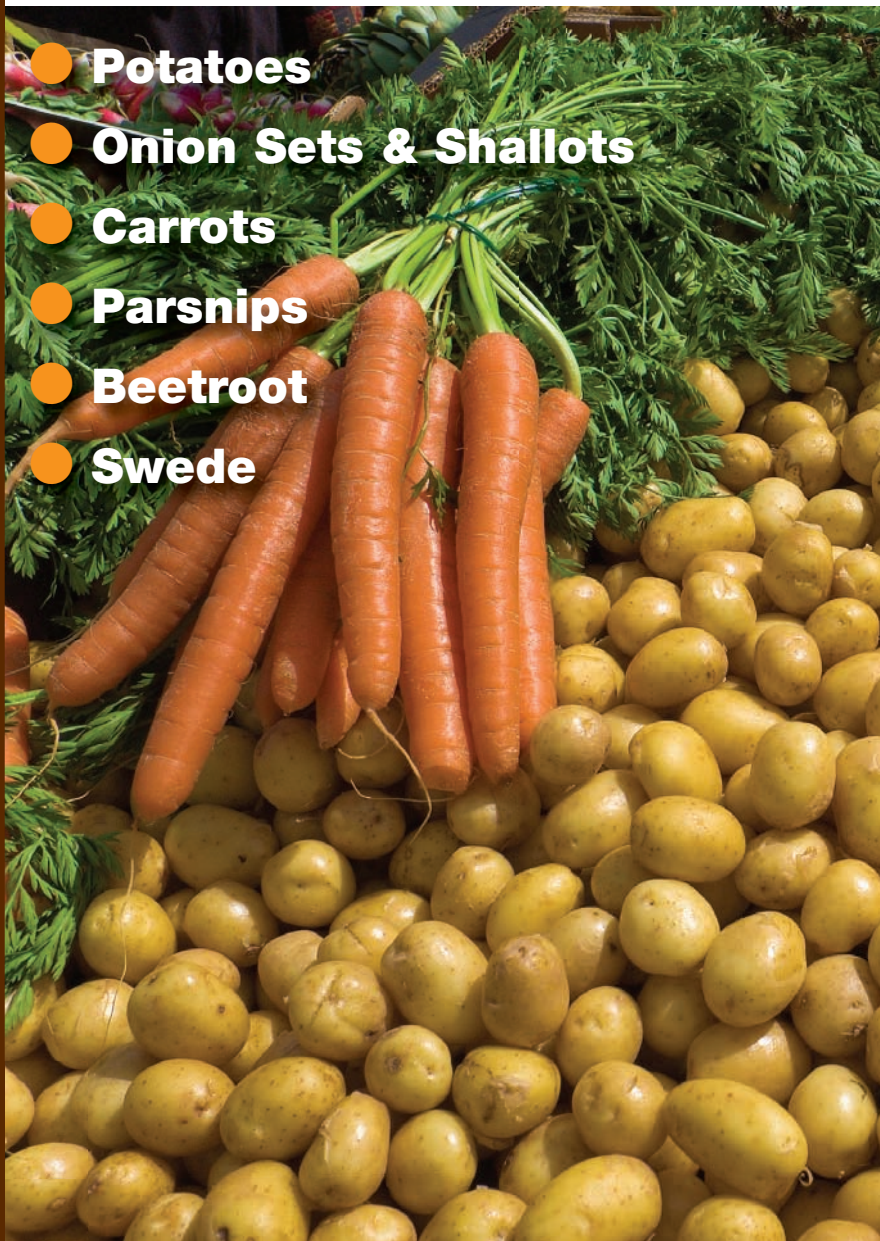
Thin out the crop as soon as the seedlings are large enough to handle. Do this in stages until the plants are 9" apart. Keep the soil hoed and remember to water in dry weather. Failure to do so will result in small and woodier roots. Rain following a dry spell can cause roots to split.

Harvesting

Begin lifting as soon as the roots are large enough to use. This will be from early autumn onwards and there is no need to wait until they reach their maximum size. You can leave in the soil and lift as required until spring.

Root Vegetables

Grow your own... Root Vegetables with Whitehall Garden Centre



- Potatoes
- Onion Sets & Shallots
- Carrots
- Parsnips
- Beetroot
- Swede



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Potatoes

Potatoes can be grown in practically every soil type. They are ideally grown in grasslands or wastelands, that are to be turned into a vegetable plot. Earthing up and the dense leaf canopy helps to clean up new ground. Choose a sunny spot if possible and avoid frost pockets. Dig the soil in autumn and add compost if the soil was not manured for the previous crop. Do not grow potatoes on land that has been used for this crop in the past two seasons



Planting Time

First Earlies	Second Earlies	Maincrop
Late March	Early- Mid April	Mid-late April

Planting

When you obtain your seed potatoes in February set them out (shoots uppermost) in egg boxes or wooden containers containing 1" dry compost. Store in a light (not sunny) frost-free position and in about 6 weeks there will be several sturdy 1/2-1" shoots. Do not damage any of these sprouts. This is known as chitting and is vital for Earlies and useful for Maincrops.

Crop Care

If there is still a danger of frost when the shoots have emerged draw a little soil over them for protection. When the haulm or stem is about 9" high it is time for earthing up. Use a draw hoe to pile loose soil to make a ridge 6" high. Water liberally in dry weather. This is most important once the tubers have started to form.

Harvesting

With earlies wait until the flowers or buds wither. Then carefully remove soil from a small part of the ridge and examine the tubers. They are ready for harvesting when they are the size of a hen's egg. Insert the fork into the ridge well away from the haulm. Lift the roots forward into the trench. With maincrops for storage, cut off the withered stems, remove them and wait for 10 days. Then lift the roots and let the tubers dry out for several hours. Then place them into a wooden box and store them in a dark frost-free room or shed, where they should keep until spring.

Onion Sets & Shallots



All onions require good soil and free drainage. Choose a sunny site for planting. Dig the ground well in early winter incorporating a generous quantity of manure or compost. Firm the surface before planting and rake in a general fertiliser such as Bonemeal.

Planting

Lightly firm the soil and make sure it is fairly moist before planting. Make shallow drills 9"-12" apart, just deep enough to cover the sets so that their tips just appear above the soil surface. Space the sets 6" apart. Fill in the drills after planting making sure that the sets are fairly.

Planting Time

March-April.



Crop Care

Protect from birds with black thread or netting. Hoe carefully or hand weed between rows to keep weeds down and water if weather is dry (not otherwise). Break off any flower stems if they appear. Mulching is useful for cutting down the need for water and suppressing weeds. Stop watering when the onions have swollen and pull back the mulch to expose the surface to the sun.

Harvesting

When the bulb is mature the foliage turns yellow and topples over. Leave them for about 2 weeks and then carefully lift with a fork on a dry day. Onions that are to be stored must be dried. Drying can take 7-21 days depending on the size of the onion and the air temperature.

Carrots



The soil must be deep, fertile and rather sandy if you want to produce fine long specimens. If your soil is rather heavy or stony grow the short rooted varieties. Where land has been manured the past year don't grow carrots at all. Prepare the seed bed 1-2 weeks before sowing - rake in a general-purpose fertiliser into the surface.

Sowing Time

April-June.



Crop Care

Thin out seedlings when they are large enough to handle, the plants should be about 2-3" apart. Take care when thinning or the root ruining carrot fly will be attracted to your garden by the smell of the bruised foliage. Water if dry and thin in the evening. Burn or bury the thinnings. Pull out or hand-hoe any weeds between the seedlings and water during periods of drought in order to keep the ground damp.

Harvesting

Pull out small carrots as required from June onwards. If the ground is hard ease out with a fork. October is the time to lift maincrop carrots. If stored correctly the crop can keep until March.

Parsnips



If you want to grow long and tapering parsnips you will need a deep, stone free soil, which has been well manured for a previous crop. Any reasonable soil in sun or light shade will grow a good crop. Dig deeply in autumn or early winter and refrain from adding any fresh manure or compost. Break down clods and rake in Growmore fertiliser when preparing the seedbed.

Sowing Time

February-March.



Crop Care

Thin out crops when they reach 1" tall and throw thinnings away. Hoe regularly to keep down weeds. Take care - never touch the crowns of the developing plants. The crop requires very little attention and is not usually attacked by pests. The soil should not be allowed to dry out, and it will be necessary to water during prolonged periods of dry weather.

Harvesting

The roots are ready for harvesting when the foliage begins to die down in autumn. It is claimed that the flavour is enhanced after the first frosts. Lift the crop as required, using a fork to loosen the soil. Leave the remainder in the soil for later harvesting.