

'Welcome to Rectory Road Allotments'

Getting started on your new plot

- Choose a section to start on and cover the rest with a weed suppressant
 - Long grass should be strimmed/cutback before beginning to dig.
 - If you are new to digging, 'little and often' is a good motto.
 - Half an hour every day is better for you than four hours in one day.
- Talk to fellow plot holders, they often have suggestions and helpful tips.
 - Potatoes are a good starter crop and will help to break up the soil.
 - A good compost container will be very useful.

What should I be doing initially?

- In the first six months you are not expected to cultivate more than 25% of your plot but within twelve months we do expect 75% of the plot to be cultivated, either for vegetables, fruit or flowers. When your plot is fully cultivated it can include all your bed areas as well as 1 poly tunnel or greenhouse and a composting area leaving 25% for 1 shed and a leisure area.

Visit <https://wivenhoe.gov.uk/services/allotments/> for further information and **FAQ's**.

- We encourage you to compost waste materials created on site in a contained heap and ask that you compost kitchen scraps at home to bring on site when well-rotted down because kitchen scraps provide vermin with an excellent food source on allotments and can risk everyone's health and safety.
 - You can plant trees in plots on slabs so that no roots enter the ground.
- A narrow path of one metre width can run the full length of the plot and paving slabs, bark or grass used between or within each allotment plot. If a path exceeds one metre in width it will be counted as part of the non-cultivated area.
 - Your plot should be clearly marked with your plot number visible from the main pathway.
 - Dogs are welcome on site but must be with you securely on a leash.
- Mains water is available and can be collected by a watering can. Hoses are permitted if fitted to a water butt or similar container. Rainwater can be harvested from the roofs of sheds, greenhouses or polytunnels and ensures that the allotments are as sustainable as possible.

Visit <https://en-gb.facebook.com/WAGAccommunity/> to find out more about more about the Wivenhoe Allotments & Gardening Community.

Practical ways to use water and retain moisture

- Water the soil at the base of plants (under their foliage), using a can, (without a rose) to direct more water towards roots.
- Water early (before the ground gets hot) or late (after the sun sets) - plants' roots will have more chance to absorb water.
 - Some plants (like seedlings and those in small pots) may require watering little but often (daily) over the summer. Try watering seedlings in pots in a water filled tray
- Established plants need to be encouraged to search for water; frequent light watering encourages roots to stay near the surface but a good soaking once a week encourages them to grow down into the soil.
- Water soil lightly before, rather than after sowing seeds to prevent soil slumping and capping as this can inhibit the growth of seedlings.
 - Some species like peas and beans have particular watering needs and may benefit from periods of reduced watering.
 - In most soils, root vegetables like carrots and parsnips do not need water once established
- Add mulch around plants, a 2-to-3-inch layer of mulch over the soil will retain moisture, suppress weeds, improve soil texture and release nutrients. Apply when the soil is wet and warm in autumn or spring and take care not to pile up against plants stems as it will cause them to rot. You can use your own allotment compost or materials such as well-rotted manure, leaf mould, spent mushroom compost, bark or grass clippings.

Visit <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/> National Allotment Society for helpful information.

How much water does your plot use?

- Water consumption across the UK varies depending on soil condition, local climate, what you grow, etc. For example, a grower using mulching and no-dig might use around 1,800 litres per year on their plot. However, another plot holder could use over 8,000 litres per year!

Climate change projections for the UK are wetter winters, drier summers and higher average temperatures across all seasons

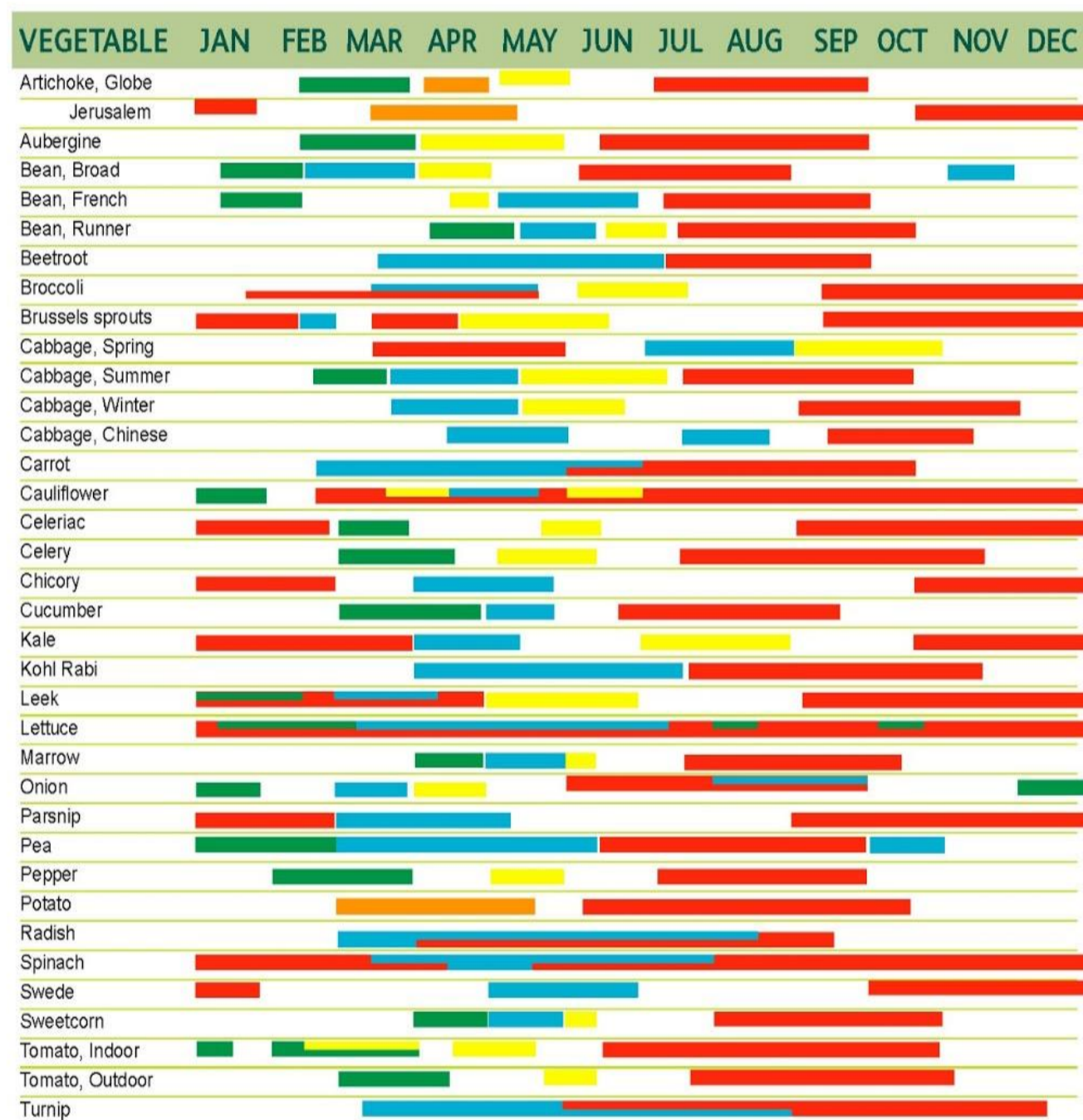
Visit <https://dryutility.info/glossary/drought/> to find out more about UK drought and positive water behaviours.

RHS GROW YOUR OWN



Veg Planner

Our Veg Planner will help you decide what to do and when in the veg garden. Why not print it out and keep it somewhere safe until you need it?



KEY
■ = Sowing indoors, under cover
■ = Sowing outdoors
■ = Planting tubers, sets or offsets
■ = Planting out seedlings
■ = Harvesting