

## **GROW NORTH 2016**

### **Some Suggested Varieties to try.**

There are pluses and minuses to being this far north. Compared with London we're consistently 5° C cooler but we do get significantly more daylight over the summer months (90 minutes a day at midsummer) which benefits many crops. The growing season here tends to be shorter but more intense. Lots of things are getting a bit marginal here and generally need a sheltered, unshaded and fairly south facing site (or a polytunnel). Perhaps surprisingly most vegetables seem to have no more problems getting through winter here than down south, though most winter crops barely stir in the darkest couple of months.

Some of these types of vegetables really do best in the tunnel – but worth trying outside if you have that warm, sheltered spot.

### **OUTSIDE**

**BEETROOT** - Detroit types, Choggia, Cylindra do well. Try Action, Egyptian Flat, Boltardy, Perfect

**BRASSICAS** - tend to do very well, like the light and don't want heat.

Kales are great, Red Russian (aka Ragged Jack) is tender, tasty and prolific; Cabbage ready around Xmas try Ormskirk 1. Others - Spring Hero, Sparkle, Hispi

Purple sprouting broccoli (PSB): Red Arrow is a good variety for a late March / April crop. Monaco (outside and polytunnel), Red Spear

**CARROTS** - Flyaway, Flakkee, Nantes 2, Amsterdam Forcing, Autumn King

**GARLIC** - Go for autumn planting and do it in the first half of October, save your own cloves and perpetuate the ones that do best. Vallelado (autumn planting does well).

**LEEKS** - stand well through winter, Tornado, Carentan are two that perform.

**ONIONS** - Senshyu Yellow (autumn), Sturon, Shakespere, Santero, Setton

**PARSNIPS** - Tender and True, Gladiator, Javelin, Half-long Guernsey

PEAS - Lincoln, Greenshaft, Feltham First, Cavalier, Early Onward (polytunnel and outside), Robinson, Vada, Meteor, Kelvedon Wonder

POTATOES – don't plant outdoors before mid April. Rocket and Swift are the earliest but unimpressive taste, Accent and Lady Christl are but a week behind them and are much better 'new' potatoes. Also Charlotte, Juliet, Cara, Maris Piper, Desiree, Arran Victory.

RUNNER BEANS - can get off to a good start but then sulk for weeks if it's too cool, Polestar seems to do better than most in an average summer.

SPINACH/CHARD - summer types tend to bolt due to the daylight, give partial shade or grow perpetual spinach (spinach beet). Gigante. Rainbow chard has, for me, been more susceptible to cold than the standard white type, so if you want that overwintered spring crop use the latter.

TOMATOES - Outdoor bush tomatoes need a decent season and a sheltered sunny spot, Red Alert is probably best bet. In the polytunnel - Gardeners Delight, Shirlee, Alicante, Tumbling Tom.

### **INSIDE**

CLIMBING FRENCH BEANS - Cherokee, Selma Zebra

DWARF FRENCH BEANS - Go for early types of dwarf French beans, they hate cold winds, Saxa seems to do reasonably but most of the early varieties should be OK. Also Purple Queen, Top Crop, The Prince.

### **INSIDE/OUTSIDE**

BROAD BEANS - best not overwintered outdoors, Express and Witkiem Manita seem almost identical, can be sown direct in March and are probably more early and prolific than most others.

COURGETTES - Can do very well most years but not in others, a favourite of mine is Romanesco which is a tad earlier and more productive than Nero di Milano: Also Black Beauty (polytunnel), baseball.