



COGS SUMMER PLANTING GUIDE

Mulch and compost

In summer it is a good idea to mulch your garden beds to help keep the soil cool and moist. One experiment showed that a 4cm layer of straw reduced evaporation by 73%. Be careful not to lay down a thick layer of sawdust or lawn clippings that can pack down to form an impenetrable barrier to water.

Soil with lots of compost contains all the nutrients your plants need for strong, healthy growth. In addition well composted soil retains water and act like a sponge to keep your plants moist through dry summer days.

Heat protection

On days of extreme temperature your plants may need to be physically protected from the heat. This can be achieved by covering plants with shade cloth secured on a frame eg weldmesh or irrigation pipe bent over to form a tunnel, with shade cloth secured by pegs).

Watering

Try not to water the leaves of plants that are susceptible to fungal diseases (eg tomatoes, cucumbers, pumpkins and zucchinis) and try to water individual plants thoroughly, rather than watering a whole area.



Always follow water restrictions and check soil moisture before watering—a rostered watering day doesn't mean you *must* water.

Weeds

Keep weeds down. They compete with your plants for food, water and sunlight. It is best to tackle them when they are small—before removing them becomes an exhausting exercise.

Pests

Pests can multiply over summer. Don't reach for the pesticides. Observe if there are natural predators present, remembering that there will be a delay between the appearance of the pest and the subsequent build-up of its predators.

If you must spray, use an environmentally benign spray. Read books such as Jackie French's *Natural Pest Control*.

Harvesting

Make sure you harvest your crop regularly - in most cases this will encourage your plants to continue cropping and you can enjoy your produce at its peak.

Remember to leave space in your vegie patch for those winter vegetables that prefer to be planted in late Summer - early autumn. Brassicas and other winter crops need time to mature before the extreme cold of winter sets in.

	DEC	JAN	FEB
Bush beans	S	S	
Beetroot	S	S	S
Broccoli	ST	ST	T
Brussel sprouts	ST	ST	T
Cabbage	ST	ST	T
Carrots	S	S	S
Cauliflower	ST	ST	T
Celery	T	T	S
Chicory	S	S	S
Chinese cabbage	S	S	
Cucumber	ST	T	
Endive	S	S	S
Kohlrabi	ST	ST	T
Leeks	S	S	
Lettuce	ST	ST	ST
Marrows	T		
Parsnips	S	S	S
Potatoes	S	S	
Radish	S	S	S
Silverbeet	ST	ST	T
Squash	ST		
Swedes		S	S
Sweet corn	ST	T	
Tomatoes	T	T	
Turnips		S	S

S = seed sowing; T = transplanting

This table is a guide only - observe the seasonal weather patterns before deciding when to plant, as there will often be distinct differences in summer weather from one year to the next.

Planting times will vary for different varieties of the one vegetable eg December plantings of heading lettuce varieties should be successful; while February plantings should be the butterhead varieties.