



23rd June 2025

British Garden Centres' top summer veggies to be growing now

With the UK's summer now in full swing and the solstice just gone, the next few weeks offer gardeners a golden window to sow and grow many vegetables and herbs. The long, warm days and ample daylight mean it's far from too late to plant, with many crops thriving when sown now, ensuring a productive kitchen garden through late summer, autumn, and even into winter. British Garden Centres has put together some recommendations on vegetables you can plant now to keep your garden vibrant and your table full of fresh, homegrown produce.

Lettuce and salad leaves: Lettuce is a classic summer crop, beloved for its crisp, refreshing leaves that brighten up any meal. Now is an ideal time to sow varieties that will provide you with a steady supply of salad leaves for lunches, dinners, barbecues, and everything in between. Varieties such as 'Salad Bowl' and 'Little Gem' are particularly well-suited to summer sowing. They grow quickly and tolerate the warmer weather better than some other types.

One key tip for growing lettuce now is to provide partial shade, especially during the hottest part of the day. This helps prevent bolting, which will cause your plant to become bitter. By sowing lettuce every two weeks, you can enjoy a continuous harvest well into autumn, keeping your salad bowl full and fresh.

Pak choi and rocket: For gardeners looking to add some variety, pak choi is a perfect choice for summer sowing. These greens are fast growers, often ready to harvest in just 30 to 45 days. They are excellent for stir-fries, salads, and soups, offering a peppery, fresh flavour that complements many dishes.

Rocket and pak choi thrive in the warmth of summer and can provide a nutritious boost to your meals throughout late summer and early autumn.

Turnips: Turnips are a fantastic crop for sowing now as they offer both edible roots and leafy greens. When sown now, turnips mature as the weather cools, which tends to improve their flavour, making them sweeter and less bitter. They typically take between 6 and 10 weeks to reach harvest size, so you can expect fresh turnips on your plate by early autumn. They grow well in most soils and require minimal care, making them suitable for all gardeners, new and experienced.

Dwarf French Beans: If space is limited, beans are an excellent choice for summer veggie planting. You can sow them directly into the ground or grow them in containers on a sunny balcony or patio. Dwarf French beans typically produce a steady harvest from late summer into early autumn. They are perfect for fresh eating, steaming, or adding to casseroles and salads. Their compact size makes them ideal for smaller gardens or urban balconies.



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Carrots: The next few weeks are your last chance to sow carrots such as 'Nantes' or 'Amsterdam Forcing' for a late-season crop. Sowing carrots later in the year often helps avoid the main carrot fly season, reducing the risk of damage to your crop. These varieties tend to produce sweet, tender roots that are perfect for roasting, steaming, or eating raw. Carrots prefer loose, well-drained soil and benefit from regular watering during dry spells.

Beetroot: Beetroot is another crop that thrives when sown in June and July. You can sow your beetroot seeds into the ground or containers for a colourful and delicious harvest. Multi-coloured varieties not only taste great but also add visual appeal to salads and side dishes.

Beetroot grows well in a range of soils and is relatively low maintenance, making it ideal for those new to gardening. You can harvest baby beetroot leaves early for salads or wait for the roots to mature in late summer. Their natural sweetness intensifies as the weather cools, making them a delicious autumn vegetable.

Spinach and Swiss chard: Perpetual spinach and Swiss chard are resilient, easy-to-grow greens that can be sown now for a steady supply of leaves into autumn and even winter. These crops tolerate cooler temperatures and can be harvested as baby leaves or mature plants. Both are packed with nutrients and versatile in the kitchen, suitable for salads, sautés, and soups.

Radishes: Radishes are one of the quickest crops to grow over summer, with some varieties ready to harvest in as little as three weeks. This makes them a perfect crop for children and new gardeners who want quick and satisfying results. Radishes grow well in containers or garden beds and can be harvested continuously with successive sowings.

Kale and cabbage: For gardeners planning, sowing kale and cabbage in July sets you up for a winter harvest. Varieties like 'Fizz' and 'Nero di Toscana' kale, and cabbages such as 'Sweetie' and spring cabbage, establish well now and can be eaten during the colder months.

Peas: Early July is the final opportunity to sow peas for a late-season crop. Mangetout and sugar snap peas are particularly reliable varieties for sowing now. These peas provide sweet, crunchy pods that are delicious fresh or cooked. Sowing peas now allows you to enjoy their fresh taste well into autumn before the colder weather sets in or simply freeze for a hearty pea and ham soup.

Herbs: Basil, coriander, dill, and parsley all thrive when sown now. You can sow them in pots or directly into the ground, ensuring a continuous supply of fresh herbs for your cooking. Herbs are easy to grow and add wonderful aromas and flavours to your meals. Regular harvesting encourages bushier growth, so keep snipping to enjoy the freshest herbs possible.



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Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres, said: “Summer is a great time to sow a wide variety of vegetables and herbs that will keep your kitchen garden productive for months to come. From radishes and oriental greens to overwintering brassicas and sweet carrots, there’s something for every gardener to grow and enjoy.

ENDS:

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Notes to Editors:

About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK’s largest family-owned garden centre group, with 73 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by the Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.

BGC was launched in 1990 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre, funded by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018, it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres, allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now, with 73 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 2,700 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, three growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres and Woodthorpe Leisure Park and Woody’s Restaurant & Bar.

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Cassie King

PR Officer

cking@britishgardencentres.com

07875 337290