

Hand Watering Vegetables

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Despite hand watering being more time consuming than using sprinklers it is a more efficient way to water your vegetables as it allows you to accurately apply water to where it is needed the most.

Watering rates

How often you water your vegetables and how much water you give them depends on the type of vegetables grown and what stage of growth they are at.

WATERING RATES FOR VEGETABLES IN SUMMER

ONION & GARLIC

Water only when conditions are very dry. I usually don't water my onions and garlic plants at all in a normal season. Onion and garlic are prone to fungal diseases if the ground is too wet.

SMALL SEEDS (carrots, lettuces)

A light watering every second day.

LARGE SEEDS (beans, peas)

Water the soil before planting the seeds then leave for four or five days before watering again.

SEEDLINGS

A very light watering every day in warmer weather.

BEANS, PEAS, CARROTS, BEETROOT, CUCUMBER, EGGPLANT, CAPSICUM & ZUCCHINI

Moderately heavy watering every two or three days.

CORN, PUMPKIN & TOMATO

Very heavy watering twice a week.

PAK CHOI AND CELERY

Water on demand to ensure that the soil they are growing in never dries out. Celery produces dried stalks and Pak Choi goes straight to seed if they don't get enough water.

Note that these rates are for normal summer weather. Apply more water as needed during heatwaves and less in autumn and spring or during wet weather.



A rose head delivers more water with a gentler flow than an adjustable spray nozzle.

tube. Wands are by far the best option for hand watering vegetables as its tube can be pushed under the plant's leaves to apply water directly to the roots. Watering leaves increases the risk of leaf fungal disease and should be avoided as much as possible.

Most wands come with a rose spray head. While the spray pattern of a rose head can't be adjusted it delivers a gentler spray with a higher flow rate than an adjustable spray nozzle.



I use a Dramm watering wand. At around \$40 they are not cheap but they are ruggedly built so will last many years and every part is replaceable. I have had my Dramm wand for over twenty years and the only part I have had to replace was the switch.

Hand watering equipment

SPRAY GUNS: They are the shape and size of a handgun and usually have an adjustable spray nozzle that produces a water pattern ranging from a spray to a concentrated jet. While this adjustable option can be useful even its widest spray pattern delivers a stronger stream of water than a rose head, strong enough to wash newly planted seedlings out of the ground if you are not careful.

WATERING WANDS: They have a trigger or valve at one end with a spray head on the other end of a length of

When and how to water

Ideally vegetables should be watered in the early morning so that the sun can dry the leaves quickly and the surface soil will be dry by the end of the day. Damp surface soil at night encourages slugs and snails and wet leaves increases the risk of fungal disease. If you have to water in the evening then do it at least an hour before the sun goes down in order to give any water on the leaves time to evaporate.

There are alternatives to sprinklers such as wicking beds and drip irrigation systems that use less water but they are costly and time consuming to set up.

Hand watering still offers the cheapest and most efficient way to water your veggies.

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