



# What To Plant And Do In The Food Garden In July

By John Ditchburn (Ditchy), The Backyard Food Gardener

[www.urbanfoodgarden.org](http://www.urbanfoodgarden.org)



## WHAT TO PLANT IN THE VEGGIE PATCH

WHAT TO PLANT IN July (Ballarat & District) *		
FROM SEED	FROM SEEDLING	IN SEEDLING BOXES #
Asparagus (crown) Onion Spring onion Rocket	<u>Lettuce</u> Spring onion	<u>Lettuce</u> <u>Onion + onion</u> <u>Spring onion + spring onion</u>
<p>* Key vegetables only, not all vegetables that can be planted at this time are listed. # Sow in seedling boxes for planting out in four to six weeks time.  <sup>1</sup> Best sown in single cell seedling trays as these seedlings don't like their roots being disturbed when transplanted. <u>UNDERLINE</u> Grow in greenhouse or polytunnel. <u>DOUBLE UNDERLINE</u> Grow in seedling hot box.  <u>RED DOUBLE UNDERLINE</u> - Grow in artificially heated seedling hot box.</p>		

## WHAT TO DO IN THE VEGGIE PATCH

### • Harvest Brussels sprouts

This is done by twisting the sprouts off the stem from the bottom up, breaking off the lower leaves as you go.

### • Harvest broccoli side shoots

After the main heads on your broccoli plants have been harvested continue to harvest the side shoots. These side shoots will get progressively smaller as successive waves of them are picked so after you have picked the side shoots two or three times cut the plant back heavily by half, this gives the plant room to put on some larger side shoots.

### • Harvest cabbages and cauliflowers

Remove the plants as soon as they have been harvested to reduce the risk of club root, which is a fungal disease that can do serious damage to brassicas plants. Signs of club root are yellowing leaves and roots with large nodules on them. It is a difficult disease to treat, if you find it in your garden destroy all plants with signs of the disease and do not plant any brassicas in effected soil for a number of years. Club root survives best in slightly acid soil so a good preventative is to add lime to the soil before planting brassicas.

### • Scuff hoe beds with vegetables growing in them

Scuff hoeing involves breaking the surface of the soil with a thin hoe. The aim is to disturb the roots of small shallow rooted weeds while leaving the deeper roots of maturing vegetables relatively undisturbed. Scuff hoeing is suitable for bare or lightly mulched soil with small weeds, it is not suitable for heavily mulched beds with large weeds. If done regularly scuff hoeing avoids the need to pull weeds out as it kills weeds before they are big enough to develop deep roots.

### • If you have not already done so prepare the asparagus bed for spring

To do this cut the asparagus stems off at ground level after they have turned yellow (this can be done with sequiturs or a brushcutter) and weed the bed. Spread a liberal amount of animal manure and blood and bone over the top then cover with a thick layer of mulch.



**Gung Hoe (top) and Trojan single pronged hoe (bottom). Both are suitable for scuff hoeing.**

- **Turn and heavily mulch vegetable beds that are to be fallowed over winter**

- **Stake and tie up autumn planted broad beans to prevent them from falling over**

If broad bean plants are left unsupported their stems will fall over as the developing beans on them get larger and heavier.



**Autumn planted broad beans tied up using 1.7 metre steel garden posts and twine. These garden posts are ideal for tying up broad beans as they have hooks up the sides to hold the twine in place without having to tie it to the stake.**

## WHAT TO DO IN THE GARDEN

- **Prune fruit trees that haven't been pruned yet**

Apple and pear trees can be pruned reasonably heavily but plums, sweet cherries, apricots, nectarine and peach trees (stone fruit trees) should only be pruned lightly as next season's fruit will be on this season's growth. An alternative is to prune the stone fruit after they have flowered in the spring. Doing this allows you to more easily identify the unproductive limbs.

- **Cut away all dead branches and damaged bark**

- **Heavily mulch around fruit trees**

The best mulch is straw or pea straw but bark mulch also can be used.

- **Plant any bare rooted trees**

1. Prune the tree to the desired shape and place in a bucket of water for around two hours.
2. While the tree is soaking dig a hole twice as wide as the pot (if is in a pot) or to the outer roots (if sold completely bare rooted) and to the same depth of the pot or roots. Use a fork to loosen up the soil around and below the hole to allow the roots to spread when they begin to grow in the spring.
3. Once prepared, fill this hole with water and allow to drain away naturally. After it is drained place the tree in the hole so that the base of the tree where the roots begin is at ground level.
4. Back fill the hole with light well drained soil and thoroughly water the tree.
5. Place straw or pea straw mulch around the tree but leave a ring of bare soil at the base of around 20 to 30 centimetres. If the mulch is right up to the base of the tree it can cause fungal collar rot.
6. Stake the tree and record what you have planted for future reference.



**A bare rooted tree is one that is literally sold 'bare rooted' (left). If you are unable to plant your bare rooted trees on the day you buy them then temporarily cover the roots in soil and thoroughly water them (right). Do not leave the bare roots exposed to air for any length of time.**

- **Plant strawberry runners in well drained soil**

When planting strawberries make sure they are certified or have come from strawberry plants that have fruited well last season. Replace strawberry plants that are more than three years old.