

What To Plant And Do In the Food Garden In September

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WHAT TO PLANT IN SEPTEMBER (Ballarat & District) *		
FROM SEED	FROM SEEDLING	IN SEEDLING BOXES #
BEETROOT ^L PEA SPRING ONION (ROCKET) & ROCKET	(LETTUCE) & LETTUCE LEEK ONION (PAK CHOI) & PAK CHOI POTATO ^L SILVERBEET SPRING ONION	<u>BASIL</u> & <u>BASIL</u> <u>CAPSICUM</u> & <u>CAPSICUM</u> <u>CELERY</u> <u>CHILLI</u> & <u>CHILLI</u> <u>EGGPLANT</u> <u>LEEK</u> <u>LETTUCE</u> <u>PAK CHOI</u> <u>SILVERBEET</u> <u>SPRING ONION</u> <u>TOMATO</u> & <u>TOMATO</u>

* 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. ¹ Best sown in single cell seedling trays as these seedlings don't like their roots being disturbed when transplanted. **X** Prone to cabbage butterfly damage when planted this time of year. **(Parenthesis)** Grow in greenhouse or polytunnel. **DOUBLE UNDERLINED** Grow in glass/plastic covered seedling box. **RED DOUBLE UNDERLINED** Grow in artificially heated seedling hot box. **E** or **L** Only Early or Late in the month.

WHAT TO DO IN THE VEGGIE PATCH

• Control snails and slugs.

Early to mid-spring is the danger period for snails and slugs as their numbers will have built up over winter and there are plenty of seedlings and emerging shoots for them to feast on. Some control options are:-

A. Go out at night with a torch and collect any snails and slugs that you see. They can be disposed of by squashing them, placing them in a bucket of salty water or feeding them to the chickens the next day.

B. Apply iron EDTA pellets around beds that have been newly planted out. These pellets are much more environmentally friendly than metaldehyde pellets as they are safe for pets and birds and they break down into iron, which means they leave no chemical residue in the soil.

C. Hold off mulching your beds until the warmer weather in mid spring. Mulch gives excellent cover to small slugs who hide under it in the daytime. Mulch also keeps the soil cooler than bare soil, in early spring you want the soil to be as warm as possible to assist in germination of seeds and plant growth.

• Plant vegetables such as broad beans, lettuces and peas (see full list above).

But make sure you leave enough space for later plantings of vegetables that require warmer conditions such as tomato, corn and capsicum. Carrots can be

planted in warmer areas but are best left until October in cooler parts.

• Begin harvesting asparagus and continue to harvest the last of the winter planted cauliflowers, broccoli, cabbages and Brussels sprouts.



Snails and slugs can be controlled by going out with a torch at night and collecting them for disposal.

• WHAT TO DO IN THE GREENHOUSE

• Plant your early tomato plants.

• Harvest winter plantings of lettuce, rocket and peas.

• Clear any finished winter crops and prepare the beds for eggplant and capsicum plantings in October.

- Plant tomatoes, capsicum and eggplant seeds in heated propagation boxes.
- Plant lettuce and silverbeet seedlings in Styrofoam seedling boxes.



Seedlings grown in a Styrofoam seedling box in my greenhouse.

WHAT TO DO IN THE GARDEN

- Spray any citrus trees showing signs of sooty mould with white oil.

Sooty mould is caused by scale insects (visible as disk like bumps), white oil suffocates them and stops their eggs from hatching. The white oil has to be applied once a week for three weeks to be completely effective. Pyrethrum can be added to the white oil to make a more potent mixture.

The scale insects are usually farmed by ants in a symbiotic relationship. The ants collect the honeydew the insects secrete and intern protect them from predators and even move their young from one tree to another. So for this reason it is also important to control the ant population as even if you kill every scale insect on a given tree the ants will carry them back to the tree to re-establish their farm. The white oil will kill some of the ants but you will also need to destroy any nearby nests. If you can't find the nests then lay some ant baits.

- Fertilise citrus trees with well-rotted chicken manure and blood and bone and mulch under the tree with straw or pea straw.

A regular dose of urea (soluble nitrogen) can also be applied, especially for citrus trees in poor condition.

- Citrus can be pruned once the threat of severe frost has passed.

To do this shape the outer smaller branches with hedge sheers and remove old twiggy growth from the centre with sequiturs.

- Plant Citrus trees after the threat of severe frosts has passed.

In cool areas it's best to cover your newly planted citrus trees with a temporary polydome for the first couple of seasons. A temporary polydome encourages growth in the warmer months and protects the tree from severe frosts in winter.



Two citrus trees with temporary polydomes over them. Once the trees are big enough to withstand heavy winter frosts the polydomes will be removed.

- You can still plant bare rooted fruit trees but you need to get them in as early as possible as they will begin to shoot as soon as it is warm enough.