



ROBYN FRANCIS

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# Autumn Planting Guide for an Abundant Winter Garden

For Subtropical Australia  
Coastal areas from NSW Mid-North  
Coast to QLD Sunshine Coast



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## WHAT TO PLANT • MARCH - MAY

| VEGETABLES           | Weeks to harvesting* | Plant as** | Notes                                                                                                         |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Beetroot             | 10-12                | DS /Sdlg   | Eat leaves as veg green                                                                                       |
| Broad Beans          | 18-20                | DS         | Harvest some tips as leafy green after 10-12 weeks                                                            |
| Bush Beans           |                      | DS         | Only in frost free warm microclimates this time of year                                                       |
| Broccoli             | 12-16                | Seedling   | Leave plants after harvesting main head for small broccoli 'sprouts'. Eat leaves like kale or cabbage.        |
| Cabbage              | 8-16                 | Seedling   | Sugarloaf is the fastest maturing variety                                                                     |
| Carrot               | 16-20                | DS         | Sow some radish seeds with carrots, the leaves protect small carrot seedlings. Harvest radish from 6-8 weeks. |
| Cauliflower          | 14-24                | Seedling   | Heavy feeders need good application of compost                                                                |
| Celery               | 16-22                | Seedling   | Start harvesting individual outer stems from 10 weeks                                                         |
| Chicory leaf         | 14-20                | Seedling   | Bitter green for salads & edible flower                                                                       |
| Chinese Cabbages     | 8-10                 | Seedling   | Hearting varieties e.g. Wongbok, Michahili & Ch broccoli                                                      |
| Ch. Greens/Choys     | 6-8                  | DS/Sdlg    | Bokchoy, Tatsoi: Replant every 4-6 weeks                                                                      |
| Endive Lettuce       | 8-12                 | Seedling   |                                                                                                               |
| Fennel (bulb)        | 16-20                | Seedling   |                                                                                                               |
| Garlic               | 24-30                | Clove      |                                                                                                               |
| Kale (all varieties) | 8-12                 | Seedling   | Take a leaf or 2 per plant, avoid overharvest                                                                 |
| Kohlrabi             | 8-10                 | Seedling   | Like good soil and compost. Leaves also veg green                                                             |
| Leeks                | 12-20                | Seedling   | Don't plant near peas and beans                                                                               |
| Lettuce              | 8-12                 | Seedling   | Open hearting grow fast, Iceberg are slow growing                                                             |



\* Weeks to harvest will vary depending on planting from seed or seedling & different varieties    \*\* DS=Direct seed into garden / Sdlg = abbreviation of Seedling

| VEGETABLES            | Weeks to start harvest* | Plant as** | Notes                                                  |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Mizuna                | 8-12                    | DS/Sdlg    | Great in salads, stir fry, curries, stews & soups      |
| Mustard greens        | 4-8                     | DS         | Resow every 4-6 weeks for continuous supply            |
| Onion                 | 12-32                   | Seedling   | Good companion for cabbage and cauliflower             |
| Parsnip               | 18-20                   | DS         | Heavy feeders, harvest over 3-4 months                 |
| Peas                  | 12-16                   | DS         | Sugar snap/snow peas and podding peas                  |
| Potato                | 16-20                   | Tuber      | Frost-free areas only                                  |
| Radish-Daikon         | 7-12                    |            | Harvest over several months. Leaves veg green          |
| Radish (salad/icicle) | 6-8                     | DS         | Harvest before they get woody. Eat leaves as veg green |
| Rainbow Chard         | 8-12                    | Seedling   | Can continuously harvest for 6-18 months               |
| Rocket                | 8-12                    | DS/Sdlg    | Replant every 6 weeks for ongoing supply               |
| Salad Burnett         | 10-12                   | Seedling   | Perennial salad herb                                   |
| Salsify               | 16-20                   | Seedling   | Unusual temperate root vegetable                       |
| Shallots              | 12-14                   | Seedling   | Plant in small groups of 4-6 seedlings                 |
| Silverbeet            | 8-12                    | Seedling   | Can continuously harvest for 6-18 months               |
| Sorrel                | 8-12                    | Seedling   | Great perennial salad green high in Vit C              |
| Spinach (English)     | 8-10                    | DS/Sdlg    | Can grow rows in between slower veg like cabbage       |
| Swedes                | 12-16                   | DS/Sdlg    | Eat leaves as veg green                                |
| Tomato                | 12-20                   | Seedling   | Only in frost-free warm microclimates                  |
| Turnip                | 10-12                   | DS/Sdlg    | Eat leaves as green veg                                |



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| HERBS          | Notes                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------------|
| Angelica       | Plant now to use through winter/spring |
| Dill           | Culinary & medicinal                   |
| Fennel (tips)  | Salad herb & garnish                   |
| Chervil        | Salad herb & garnish                   |
| Chives         | Eat leaves in salads - medicinal       |
| Dandelion      | Eat leaves in salads - medicinal       |
| Parsley        | Source of Vit C, Calcium & Iron        |
| Coriander      | Sow again in 6 weeks, save the seeds   |
| Chickweed      | winter garden weed, edible & medicinal |
| Marjoram       | Cooking & medicinal herb               |
| Oregano        | Cooking & medicinal herb               |
| Rosemary       | Culinary herb, don't use medicinally   |
| Sage           | Culinary & medicinal herb              |
| Thyme - Garden | Medicinal for coughs & sore throat     |
| Thyme - Lemon  | Culinary & medicinal herb              |
| Winter Savory  | Culinary & medicinal herb              |

| Edible FLOWERS       | Notes                                                                |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Borage               | Eat flowers and tender young leaves                                  |
| Carnation/Pinks      | Petals in salads                                                     |
| Calendula            | Petals in salads, medicinal herbs                                    |
| Edible Chrysanthemum | Eat petals only – not base of flower.<br>Leaves are edible in salads |
| English Daisy        | Use in salads                                                        |
| Hollyhock            | Petals in salads & herb teas                                         |
| Hibiscus             | Petals in salads & as garnish                                        |
| Nasturtium           | Flowers & leaves in salads                                           |
| Pansy                | Flowers in salads & garnish                                          |
| Petunia              | Petals in salads                                                     |
| Viola                | Flowers in salads                                                    |

## General Tips

### Fast Food from the Garden: Early Harvest

Rapid harvest vegies you can start harvesting after 4-5 weeks include Salad & Icicle radish, rocket, open hearting lettuce (e.g. Oak-leaf, Lollo frilly leaf, cos-type etc), kales, silverbeets and chards, leaves of turnip and swede.

**IMPORTANT:** take only one or 2 leaves per plant every few days while the plants are young so they keep growing strongly. Over-harvesting at this stage can slow them down. It's amazing how a leaf here and a leaf or 2 there from a number of plants soon gives enough for a salad or greens for the cooking pot.

### Feed your soil biology

If you only have limited supplies of compost and/or worm castings here's a way to maximise the benefits as a liquid fertiliser, especially if you don't have the equipment for making a full brewed Compost Tea.

NB If you're using town water please fill your bucket and let it stand for 24 hours to let the chlorine evaporate off, otherwise it will kill your beneficial microbes. For an 8-liter bucket of water add 2-3 cups of compost and/or worm castings, add 3 Tbsp of sugar or molasses dissolved in 1 cup warm water. You can also add some yogurt whey or liquid from sauerkraut or kimchee, and add 1 Tbsp liquid kelp if you have any. Aerate the mix for at least half an hour by stirring it in alternating directions. Dilute with equal parts water to spread around the garden. You will need to strain it before using in a watering can. Aerate again if it stands for more than 2 hours .

### Companion Planting

There's lots of good information about companion planting your vegies to try out. It's a useful way to maximise diversity in the garden, confuse pests and make the best use of small spaces.

### Flowers for Bees, Beneficial bugs and Eating

Plant plenty of flowers to attract bees to pollinate your vegies and to bring in the beneficial insects that love to eat your pests. Check out some of the edible flowers that grow this time of year



**Planning ahead  
for coming seasons**

### Check out my Eight-fold Year Garden Chart

Annual seasonal planner for what to plant and what's in season throughout the year. Based on the Celtic 8-fold year for the southern hemisphere, packed with information. Two different versions available for Temperate climates and for the Sub Tropics.

Wishing you good health and much joy and abundance from your garden, and a surplus to share with others....

*Robyn Francis*