

Guide for the Home Garden

Green Crops for the Winter

*"This is the time when weeds
are shallow rooted,
Suffer them now and they'll o'er-
grow the garden,
And choke the plants, for want of
husbandry."*

—Shakespeare.

CABBAGE (Savoy, early and late), cauliflower, broccoli, borecole (Scotch kale), Brussels sprouts—these crops form the basis of supplies of green vegetables for autumn and winter use. It should not be necessary to stress the importance, apart from the necessity, of providing supplies of these vegetables; they are essential in the home garden if continuity of supplies of fresh vegetables is to be maintained.

Seed Sowing

The seed of any and all of these varieties may be sown from mid-September to mid-November. If sown in late October or November, the seed should have a greater depth coverage than if sown in early spring or late autumn. From 3,000 to 5,000 plants of these varieties may generally be expected from 1 oz. of seed. If a seedling box is used to raise the plants, it should be 6 in. deep. This depth will permit full root development of the plants, but they can also be grown in an open seed-bed. Whichever method is adopted, it is better to sow the seed in rows rather than broadcast. When ready, the young plants can be taken from the seedling-box or seed-bed and planted where it is intended they should remain until full grown. Particular attention to watering the seedlings is necessary, and occasional dressing of liquid manure—always after a good watering—will be beneficial.

Soil

Good crops of these varieties may be grown on light soil, but the best results are obtained in a heavy loam, rich in organic matter, and well drained. Locations which, during autumn, become heavily saturated with water are undesirable.

Fertilisers

Being gross feeders, these crops require a plentiful supply of plant food. Provided the land is well supplied with organic matter, less artificial fertilisers will be required; otherwise a mixture of 1 lb. of sulphate of ammonia, 3 lb. of superphosphate, and $\frac{1}{2}$



This box, made from an apple case, contains 120 cauliflower plants.

[A. L. Bryant, photo.]

lb. of sulphate of potash should be distributed along the shallow furrows where the plants are to be set. This amount of fertiliser, if purchased at bulk prices, will cost about 7d., and will be adequate for 25 yards of row.

Two subsequent dressings of nitrate of soda or sulphate of ammonia may be necessary should the plants appear

to be slow in development. At any rate, one application of the former fertiliser when the plants are about half-grown will be of considerable assistance in stimulating growth. The surest indication of the need for the application of a "straight" nitrogenous fertiliser to any of the varieties under consideration is the appearance on the heavy outside foliage and on the tips of the inside leaves of a hard, bluish-purple colour. When these signs appear, nitrate of soda—just a good pinch that can be held between the thumb and the first two fingers—is applied to each plant after a good watering has been given and hoed in. An improvement in the colour of the foliage should be clearly seen within a week. This direction applies particularly to cabbage and Brussels sprouts, the latter crop being greatly benefited by applications when the sprouts begin to develop.

Where cruciferous crops are being sown, liming should not be neglected, and an annual dressing of agricultural lime at the rate of 4 oz. per sq. yd. should be given. In addition to liming, and as a further prevention against the development of club-root, a three-year rotation of crops should be practised.

Planting

Twenty-four hours before removing the seedlings the seed-bed should be

Seasonal Don'ts

Don't

neglect the crops which will produce food from the garden during April to October. During November seeds of seed beans, marrows, pumpkins, swedes and plants of Brussels sprouts, celeriac and kumaras may be planted out. Crops which have been planted previously, such as maincrops of beetroot, carrots and parsnips, onions and potatoes, and the seedlings (not yet ready for transplanting) of borecole, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, leek, silver beet should all receive special attention.

Don't

plant broad beans at this season. They are a cool weather crop, and, if grown during the summer, become infested with disease and pests. There are plenty of other varieties of beans which grow satisfactorily during the summer season.