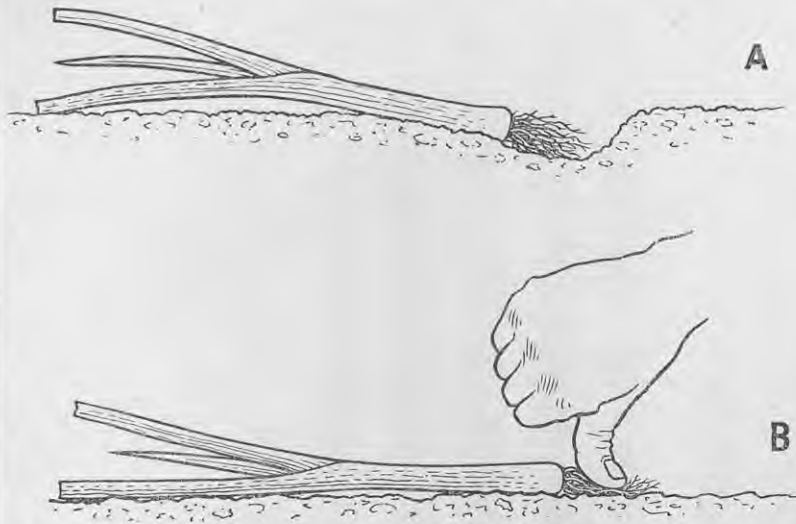


TRANSPLANTING AUTUMN-SOWN ONIONS



Plants may be set in a shallow trench (A); if the roots are covered and the soil firmed, they will quickly pull the plant into an upright position. The same result may be obtained by pressing the roots into the soil with the thumb or finger (B).

Large Purple are the commonly grown varieties, the former being more popular.

The Jerusalem artichoke is really a tuberous-rooted sunflower, the tubers of which form the vegetable. It is propagated from tubers, which throw out annual stems to a height of 6ft. or more. As they are rather difficult to eradicate when established, it is advisable to grow them in an isolated piece of ground. Avoid over-manured soils, which are liable to promote excess top growth at the expense of the tubers. Tubers may be planted during August and September in rows 3ft. apart, allowing 2ft. between plants. A good system for the home garden is to keep the plants on the same plot for several years, simply lifting the tubers each autumn or winter and replanting them in the same place; sufficient plant food should be added to keep up the fertility. Cultivation between the plants to keep down weeds is necessary until they throw out the tuber-bearing runners; all hoe cultivation should then cease. Tubers may be dug in autumn or winter and stored in dry sand or sawdust in a cool place.

White Jerusalem, which has pure white tubers almost round and with few and very shallow eyes, is the best variety.

Carrots

In most districts an early sowing of carrots may be made now, but for the main crop sowing is best deferred for another month. Where the depredations of the carrot rust fly (*Psila rosae*) are severe, infestation may be minimised by sowing the seed in December as far as possible from the position of previous carrot crops or of other susceptible crops such as celery, parsnips, or parsley. The rust fly is a small, two-winged, shining black,

yellow-legged fly about 1/6in. long. It lays its eggs in the soil close to the carrot root, and the legless maggots enter the taproot of the carrot and work upward. The maggots grow up to 1/2in. long and make small rust-coloured tunnels in the roots. Young plants wilt and die. This insect is very difficult to control, but horticultural naphthalene broadcast at the rate of 1oz. a square yard is an effective repellent; it does not damage the foliage and should be applied at intervals during growth but not later than 2 weeks before harvesting or there may be some residual taint of naphthalene after carrots are cooked. Another method found effective is to apply D.D.T. 50 per cent. wettable powder, 1/2oz. in 4 gallons of water, along the plant rows when plants are about 2in. high and directly after thinning. Applications should be repeated at monthly intervals and should be sufficient to penetrate the soil to a depth of 3 or 4in.

The rust fly should not be confused with aphides which commonly attack carrot foliage in all parts of New Zealand; for control of carrot aphid spray at regular intervals with nicotine sulphate 1:300 (1 fl. oz. of nicotine sulphate to 4 gallons of water plus 2oz. of soft soap). Best results are obtained if the application is made on a hot day and the foliage is completely covered.

Soil preparation and seed sowing instructions are similar to those given for parsnips in last month's notes. Drills should be 12in. apart and the plants should be thinned finally to 4 to 6in. spacings.

Carrots, being much in demand for culinary purposes and being easily grown, should be included in every selection of vegetables for the home garden. If used before they are fully grown they are very tender and tasty.

To secure a succession of young carrots seed may be sown from September to January in most districts.

Varieties: Popular early varieties are Earlycrop and Early Scarlet Horn, while for the main crop Chantenay, Manchester Table, and Oxheart or Guerande are satisfactory.

Celery

Where the home garden has facilities for raising plants seed of celery may be sown now for December and January planting out. It should be sown fairly thickly—about a level teaspoon to a standard box (24in. x 14in. x 4in.) containing specially prepared soil. The seed should be covered very thinly and firmed with a piece of board. When the seedlings are large enough to handle they should be pricked out 2in. apart each way into boxes from which they can be cut out later with the soil attached and planted in the garden. The seedlings should receive plenty of ventilation and should be kept about 12in. from the glass so that they do not become drawn. Premature seed development of plants is a frequent cause of disappointment to home gardeners and this condition is usually the result of a sudden check to the growth of the plant. This is often brought about by spells of cold weather.

Varieties: Self-blanching varieties are most popular in the North Island and favourites are Gilt-edged Golden Self Blanching and White Plume. Some gardeners prefer those which require earthing up or wrapping for blanching; Crystal or Solid White is perhaps the best for this purpose and is the usual variety grown in southern districts.

Celeriac or Turnip-rooted Celery

Celeriac, a member of the celery family, has a large, turnip-like root, which is the portion of the plant that is eaten. Celeriac is a good vegetable for flavouring soups and can also be boiled and sliced and served with white sauce or used fresh in salads. Seed may be sown from September to January and plants set out from December to March; treatment is similar to that for celery. Transplanting of the young seedlings is essential. Plant seedlings in rows on the flat (not in a trench like celery) 18in. apart and allow 12in. between the plants.

Celeriac should not be earthed up like celery, but will develop better bulbs if the soil is carefully drawn away from the plants at frequent intervals. The lateral shoots and fibres should be carefully removed to keep the roots intact, but in doing so growth and development must not be interfered with. The enlarged roots may be dug after they attain sufficient size for good edible quality and stored in sand. Before storing roots the outer leaves should be removed, but the centre or heart leaves must be left to prevent further development.

Frost-tender Vegetables

In most districts it is still too early to sow seed of frost-tender vegetables such as cucumbers, tomatoes, marrows, and pumpkins except under glass or other protective covering. Tomatoes take approximately 6 weeks and the other vegetables mentioned about 3 weeks from seed sowing until they are ready for transplanting and this should be taken into account when deciding on the planting programme.