

# THE HOME GARDEN IN MAY



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[Sparrow]  
Tidiness can make the vegetable garden an attractive place even on a sunless day in May.

**T**HERE is usually digging and much tidying to be done in the home garden in May, as the residues of half-hardy crops such as tomatoes, beans, marrows, pumpkins, and potatoes have to be cleared away and the land they occupied dug over. Nothing is to be gained in most gardens by planting or sowing any but the hardiest vegetables, as usually the weather can be expected to become progressively less favourable for growth until the shortest day.

**S**OME sowing and planting may be done in May if the soil is well drained and cultivated. If firming is necessary in preparation of the soil, it should be confined to the seed or plant rows and done only in moderation to medium and heavy soils. A simple method of testing soil condition for sowing is to walk on it. If it sticks to the soles of the boots, it is too wet.

Comparatively little growth can be expected in most gardens in the next

2 months and the home gardener must decide whether anything is to be gained by sowing or planting any but the hardiest subjects such as broad beans or spinach now. It is not advisable to plant or sow even hardy subjects in cold situations where the soil is heavy and poorly drained. Temperature and other aspects of the weather are not usually so favourable that the plants should be subjected to the additional hazard of a cold, wet soil if this can be avoided.

Cabbages and cauliflowers can still be set out in most gardens where the soil is well drained as advised in last month's "Journal" and, where conditions are not likely to be too severe, lettuce as well. Broad beans and spinach can be sown and in some districts peas, but unless the garden is in a very favourable situation and the weather is very good, it is best to defer sowing seeds of such plants as carrots, onions, turnips, and even radish until July, August, or September according to conditions.

The top growth of asparagus should be cut down as soon as it begins to turn yellow and digging of kumara and potato crops should be completed without delay. Potatoes and other root crops in store should be sorted over to remove those with rots.

Vacant ground can be sown with a green crop and, if necessary, limed and attention given to the compost