

Grown Your Own Healthy Veg

Growing your own veggies is always the healthy option, as well as being a very satisfying pastime. One doesn't even have to have a dedicated vegetable patch; you can plant them in a sunny spot in between your shrubs and flowers and create an "ornamental kitchen garden".

A border of red lettuce around your rosemary or lavender, for example, is very attractive and you can harvest them whenever you please.

Planting a selection of vegetables in this manner also allows for easy crop/plant rotation which helps prevent diseases and pests becoming a problem. If the same plant is grown in the same place every year, pests and diseases may build up in the soil. Different plants also take different nutrients from the soil, while others add nutrients.

Rotate the plants in the following order for maximum benefit:

- first legumes (pea, beans)
- then leaves and fruit (lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, peppers)
- followed by roots (beetroot, carrots, leeks, onions, potatoes)

Plant out only a few plants of a variety at a time to avoid a surplus and plan your planting at three-week intervals to ensure a steady supply of veg. Place compost on the beds when you plant, water regularly and feed with a liquid food for added growth.

If you don't care much for sowing seed, a wide range of seedlings is available at Starke Ayres Garden Centre for speedier results.