

Episode 139 show notes and advice

Episode description

In today's episode, Sarah discusses the best edibles to sow now for picking and eating right through until April. From the most delicious lettuce and chard to incredibly tasty and hardy herbs, feel inspired to get growing this September!

In this episode, discover:

- Sarah's top picks for winter cropping
- Expert advice on getting the best from your seeds

episode 139 advice sheet

Hardy edible plants (1:39)

Lettuces

These varieties are so much better grown over wintertime and have a much longer cropping season.

- Lettuce 'Merveille de Quatre Saisons' – Generally great for sowing and growing any month of the year. Sow seeds 2cm – 3cm apart into a gutter pipe filled with peat-free compost. There's no need to drill holes, just water the pipe, and it will all hold together. In 10 days or so, the seeds will germinate and can be pushed out ready to fill the space the tomato plants previously occupied in the greenhouse.
- Lettuce 'Black Seeded Simpson' – Another fantastic lettuce, originating from America. If you leave this to grow on, it will grow to be huge. Grow in a similar way to Lettuce 'Merveille de Quatre Saisons.'
- Lettuce 'Rouge d'Hiver' – Another variety that did exceptionally well in the trials last year. A wonderful, dark crimson, hardy lettuce.
- Lettuce 'Salad Bowl' - Keep picking and it will keep producing tender new apple-green leaves. Sow your oak leaf lettuce almost all-year-round by serial sowing.

Other things to grow (10:08)

- Salad Rocket 'Serrata' – Best sown between September and March or April. Sow now as supposed springtime to prevent the plant from bolting. You will also get a

consistent crop over winter as rocket loves the cold, wet, and grey! Cut and come again - what's not to love.

- Mustard 'Red Frills' – Simply stunning, this tastes of new potatoes and is completely hardy.
- Mizuna 'Red Knight' F1 – Vibrant crimson leaves and unbeatable flavour. Lovely in salad, stir fry, or soup.

Spinach (12:10)

- Spinach 'Rubino' F1 – Very elegant with wine red stems and veins. It's super hardy and will last from winter until springtime, outside or in. If there's a cold snap, simply lay over some fleece or a sheet of plastic for added protection.
- Spinach 'Medania' – More suited to those who grow with a cold frame. This variety will offer large dark green leaves which are super tasty.

Chard (13:20)

- Chard 'Bright Lights' – Incredibly beautiful and works well for the ornamental vegetable garden, with lovely rainbow stems. Great for adding to salads.
- Swiss Chard 'White Silver 2' – Another standout variety, but probably Sarah's favourite as it's so prolific. Suitable for eating with pasta, chickpeas, or within a gratin.

Top tip – don't forget to cook the stems and the leaves separately as they take a different amount of time to cook. Add the stems first and follow with the leaves.

Kale (14:48)

Although it's slightly late for sowing brassicas, Sarah says no vegetable garden would be complete without kale.

- Kale 'Dwarf Green Curled' F1 – This variety still rapidly germinates in September, and it can be picked as a baby leaf. A real classic wilted with a tahini dressing.

Herbs (15:35)

Hardy annuals or biennials which are perfectly happy whatever the weather throws at them.

- Parsley 'Gigante di Napoli' – Sarah's no.1 edible plant. The Perch Hill team perform two sowings of this a year. It's absolutely wonderful all through the year.

- Coriander 'Leisure' - Coriander is the one herb Sarah would sow at the shoulders of the year (September or March). It loves the weather to be gold, grey, and wet weather and will crop in just 6 weeks. In -3 to -5 temperatures, it'll stop cropping.
- Chervil 'Vertissimo' – Again, this herb loves the cold, grey, and wet weather! Best eaten raw or added to an omelette at the very end.