

WATERING CROPS – DRY SEASON

Carrot	Never water, it will lower yield and affect taste.
Jerusalem artichoke	Never water, it encourages the formation of leaves and not tubers
Parsnips, Swedes	No beneficial effects from watering
Onions	In a very dry season, water the ground before planting to get your sets off to a good start
Turnip	In a dry year, flood the bed about a month before harvest
Cauliflower(winter), cabbage, calabrese	If the soil is very dry, puddle in to help them get established
Potato (main crop)	Water only when the flowers have just opened – at any other time it will lower the yield
Spinach	Regular watering will extend the harvest
Potato (early)	Regular watering will extend the harvest
Tomato (outdoor)	Regular watering will increase yield but may reduce flavour
Cucumber	Water through growing season to improve both yield and taste
Courgette, Marrow	Water when the fruits start to swell, then water copiously
Leek	The more you water the bigger the crop
Lettuce	Water from sowing to harvest, encouraging rapid tender growth
Spring Onion	Once you start to water you cannot stop!
Cauliflower (Summer)	Continuous watering to stop plants running to seed
Peas	Water throughout the life of this crop
Runner Beans	Continuous watering and crop may still fail
Celery	Huge volumes of water required
Chinese Cabbage	Any shortage of water will cause it to fail and run to seed
Sweetcorn	Watering when plants are young and the earth is dry can increase yields

How to save money

- Water carefully
- Let grass grow longer as it will stay greener
- Avoid sprinklers as in one hour they consume more water than an average family used in one whole day.
- Use manure and compost to help retain soil moisture
- Mulch – a layer of tree bark, gravel and compost will be protection from the sun and reduce moisture loss
- Use a watering can to monitor the amount of water given to each plant
- Water in new plants thoroughly – but not too much afterwards. This will encourage a deep root system and get the most benefit from soil moisture
- Remove weeds
- Do not over water herbs – many come from hot climates so can endure long hot spells
- Use rainwater butts to supplement tap water
- Fit non-return valves – these are a statutory requirement by government Water Act 1945, Section 17, Bye-law 25 to all water authorities and is enforced on Agricultural land, which includes allotments. They should be fitted to each standpipe, but most authorities have stated that one is fitted to the main inlet pipe to the site is sufficient. The purpose is to stop any chemical inadvertently getting into the local water supply.
However, to avoid the site water system from being contaminated it would be necessary to fit valves to each tap.