

Before I go any further I must correct some misinformation I gave about Garlic cultivation in the last article. I incorrectly said use Super Phosphate as a soil dressing, when in fact I should have said use Potash at 4oz per square yard hoed in one week prior to planting out.

Pressing on.  
Vegative leek propagation.

The stock leeks that were potted up in August are making steady growth. If we run into any prolonged wet weather these will be moved into the polytunnel. If the pots become waterlogged the leeks could rot. 'It has happened to me in the past.' Now they have some foliage I shall give the plants a spray against leek rust.



I was hoping to keep the heads of grass growing on the stems until October. Unfortunately I noticed the grass was wilting, the stalks had rotted through and I had



to cut them and pop them into a milk bottle of water. On the 20<sup>th</sup> Sept I cut the heads off the stems and placed them in small saucers of water. This perked the heads up and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept I potted up the young leeks into Levington F2s .

This is the head of grass after cutting off the stalk.

The young leeks will start to root in a couple of days, ready for potting on into the deep plugs.

I like to cut the head in half as it makes it easier to pluck off the young leeks. Only use those with a good clean root base, disregard anything that is brown around the roots. Smaller leeks not for exhibition can be potted up in a seed tray and grown on to provide early leeks for the kitchen. They will be quite happy in a cold greenhouse given a position in good light. The exhibition ones get the premier treatment.



Those destined for exhibition are started off in deep plugs. After potting up these were given a spray of Copper Fungicide. They will be grown on in a cold green house making sure they have a position in good light. By October I will probably give them supplementary lighting by way of my LED lamp. They will be kept ticking along until

November when the heat will go on maintaining a minimum overnight temperature of 50f or 10c.

The garden leeks in the seed tray will not be molly coddled, as long as they

are kept frost free and in good light they will tick along nicely. More on leeks in the October articles.'



I don't know if there will be any seed available for 'Cedrico' tomatoes this year. I am not taking any chances. I have taken cuttings from healthy material.

This is the way I carried the strain through last winter. These cuttings will be showing stubby roots in a couple of weeks. They will then be potted up into Levington F2S compost using 3" square pots.

They will then be potted on into 5" pots using Levingtons M2 compost. When the plants get too big I just start again, taking more cuttings and ditching the parent plant. I usually only do this once during the winter months.

I aim to set out the plants in bottomless pots by January. Ready for the new season.

In my last article I mentioned Autumn sown onion sets. I also remember recommending the varieties 'Radar and Red Barron'. Well this morning I popped down to my local garden centre to make the purchase. I think the little advert saying, **'Should Have Gone To Spec Savers'** applies here. I came home with 'Troy' for the whites and 'Winter Red' for the red variety. 'Don't ask'.

Anyway they were healthy bulbs, that much I could see.



These are the reds planted up in deep plugs. I like to get a root system on the sets before planting out in the open ground. I find if you put them straight out into the soil the birds have a gay old time pulling them out. These should be ready in a couple of weeks' time.

At this time of year space becomes a premium in the greenhouse. I shall shortly be clearing out the tomatoes from one side and putting up the slatted bench.

Another job I have done is to clean the glass to maximise the light to the tomatoes left in the greenhouse.

Next year I shall be growing some of my toms on cultivated root stock. This has the advantage of giving the plants high resistance to most soil born diseases. This system is very beneficial to any gardener who grows their toms direct in the soil. Growing on rootstock gives the plants extra vitality with much improved root growth. For this reason it is not suitable for contained systems such as growbags.

Kings Seeds sell Estamino F1 root stock seed. 12 seeds will cost £4.25.

Next year I will go through the process of grafting your chosen variety onto the root stock. It is a simple procedure and much cheaper than buying in grafted plants which can cost £10.00 for three toms.

So if you have had problems with soil borne disease get some root stock seed and look forward to much improved results next year.

This is also the time of year when I am busy shucking out beans. Make sure the skin is crisp and dry. Here we have 'Hawkesbury Wonder and Prince' Dwarf French Beans.



They were all mixed up in one bucket; mind you they are quite recognisable out of their pods.

To improve the strain for exhibition it is a matter of reselection, only keeping those beans with a minimum of 6 beans to a pod. Lesser beans go into the kitchen seed department.



The same goes for the runner beans. Ideally I select 8 podders that have curly tails and fully grown out necks. Also any bean that shows a different colour to those above is discarded. These are the Stenner strain that I obtained from the Plumb family a couple of years ago.

While the weather stays fine I am ploughing on with projects on the allotment. This is not the time of year to sit on ones hands. When the winter weather closes in one feels less inclined to get out and tackle all the nasty jobs.



Last Sunday I judged my last show of the year. This was an inter society event held at Tarrant Keyneston in Dorset. Some cracking veg on show. Best Collection in show went to the potatoes grown by Ted Perren.

The amazing thing is, that Ted grew them in 10 litre bags of potato compost. That's half the size I normally use. Mind you it needs careful attention to watering, Ted told me he watered every three days. Certainly worth a try though. The potato at top of picture is Carolus. Not easy to get hold of at the moment.

That's about it for September. In the next article we shall be sowing overwintering broad beans. I saved my own seed of Aquadulce from last year. They have kept perfectly in the fridge in a strong paper bag.

Lacking your own seed, they are in the garden centres now. Time to get some in.

More from me in the Early Oct article. John Trim